

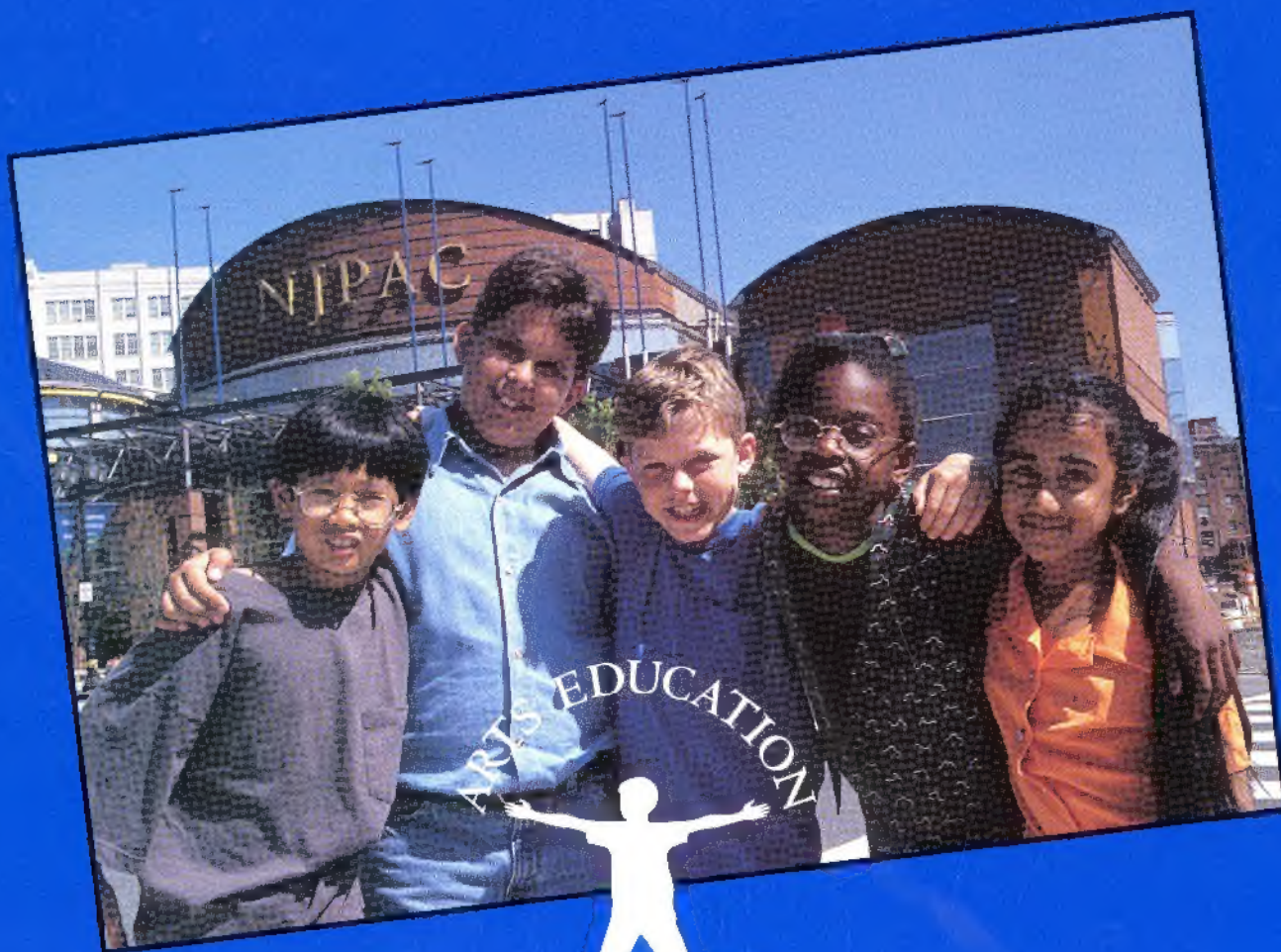
New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Bell Atlantic

PASSPORT TO CULTURE

EXPRESSIONS OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Music, Dance and Theater from around the World



To the children of today and the future –

*May your lives be filled with music,
dance and theater, and may your
experience at the New Jersey
Performing Arts Center expand your
horizons, uplift your spirits and
inspire you to achieve your dreams.*

Ball Atlantic
PASSPORTTOCULTURE

EXPRESSIONS OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

Music, Dance and Theater from around the World

Published by the
New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



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PASSPORT TO CULTURE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	
Philip S. Thomas	1
Note from Bell Atlantic	2
Peter J. Ventimiglia, Ph.D.	
THE PERFORMING ARTS	3
<i>Theater</i>	
The Dream Catchers	5
Henriette Major	
Coming Together	6
David Shookhoff	
No Strings	10
David Shookhoff	
<i>Music</i>	
The Music of African Americans and Latinos in the United States	12
Angela M.S. Nelson, Ph.D.	
Bernice Johnson Reagon: In Her Own Voice	16
Meet the Orchestra	17
Judith Nachison	
<i>Dance</i>	
Beyond Words	18
Elizabeth Kendall	
Nai-Ni Chen: In Her Own Voice	24
FESTIVALS	25
<i>Winter Festival</i>	
Winter Holidays: Connecting the Past, Present and Future	27
Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D.	
American Christmas in the Italian and Filipino Communities	28
Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D.	
Promesa de Reyes	29
Ruth E. Lugo, Ph.D.	
Hanukkah: The Festival of Light	31
Susan Schnur	
Kwanzaa: Continuity, Unity and Hope	32
Gayle T. Tate, Ph.D.	

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

NJPAC World Festival

Portuguese Words and Ways	34
--	----

Rumos e Sons Portugueses

Donzelina Augusta Barroso

Festival of Young Artists

Young Artists Hit the High Notes	41
---	----

Missy Sullivan

COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATIONS 49

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: Civil Rights and Black Religious Music	51
---	----

Reverend William D. Watley, Ph.D.

A Journey to Identity and Liberation	53
---	----

Sonia Sanchez

Music of Hope: The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra	55
---	----

Alan Zelenetz, Ph.D.

Paul Robeson: An American Hero	57
---	----

Barbara Pasternack

THE COMMUNITY LINK 59

Then and Now	61
---------------------------	----

Jane Remer

NJPAC Grows Arts Centered Children	63
---	----

Philip S. Thomas

PRINCIPAL AFFILIATES 69

In the Spirit of Inquiry	71
---------------------------------------	----

Stephanie S. Hughley

Principal Affiliates: In Their Own Voices	72
--	----

Nai-Ni Chen	72
-------------------	----

Carolyn Dorfman	73
-----------------------	----

George Street Playhouse	74
-------------------------------	----

Deborah Mitchell	75
------------------------	----

Nicholas Rodriguez	76
--------------------------	----

WBGJ-JAZZ 88	77
--------------------	----

Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts	78
--	----

BIBLIOGRAPHY 79

Bibliography	81
---------------------------	----

FOREWORD

by Philip S. Thomas

From the very outset, the dream that was to become the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) included children, families and teachers filling the concert halls and experiencing world-class performances by international, national and New Jersey artists.

And so, as NJPAC inaugurates its opening season, both NJPAC's general programming and its arts education series include performances designed specifically for young audiences and their families.

NJPAC's Arts Education Department launches its school matinees and weekend performances with the Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture* SchoolTime and FamilyTime Series. The 1997–1998 season focuses on the theme of harmony among all people, and celebrates the diverse cultures and traditions represented in New Jersey and throughout our nation.

The repertoire meets very specific objectives. It exposes audiences to a wide range of traditional, classical and contemporary art, and shares what is joyful and transcendent in life. It also presents works of art designed to take audiences beyond the performance experience and engage them in a deeper exploration to consider ways in which they might move our society and each other toward a greater respect and love for people of different cultural, economic and geographic backgrounds.

The rich selection of cultural expression includes *bomba* and *plena* music originating from Puerto Rico, traditional Chinese dance, a Scottish folktale, music derived from the African American experience, a play depicting the challenges and hopes of the hidden children of the Holocaust, classical ballet and more. All of the programs affirm NJPAC's belief in the power of the arts to strengthen the fabric that binds us together.

In keeping with the spirit of harmony, the Arts Education Department set out to produce a publication that would not only provide a comprehensive overview of NJPAC's yearlong programming for children and families but also stimulate a greater appreciation for diverse cultural heritages and traditions and offer insights into the creative process. We invited nationally recognized scholars and artists in music, dance and theater, as well as writers representing the arts of a particular nation or ethnic group, to participate in its creation. The result is this illuminating collection of essays.

Using the Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture's* 1997–1998 repertoire as a springboard, the writers examine how music, dance and theater reflect and sustain the values, traditions and heritage of a people. These pages also give voice to the individual artist. We learn what motivates the choreographer, the composer, the storyteller and the playwright to create art – to express their deepest hopes and aspirations, to effect social change, to celebrate the human spirit, to experiment with aesthetic boundaries – and what influences their artistic choices, whether it be their cultural roots, their own life experiences or their muse.

When NJPAC's 1997–1998 season comes to a close, we hope that *Expressions of the Human Spirit* will continue to serve as a valuable resource for teachers, families and children as they continue their exploration and discovery of the performing arts, both at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and beyond.

Bell Atlantic - New Jersey, Inc.
540 Broad Street, 20th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07101

Peter J. Ventimiglia, Ph.D.
Vice President
External Affairs



September 1997

Dear Friends:

Bell Atlantic has a long tradition of support for the arts. It is a tradition that is underscored by the thousands of men and women who work for Bell Atlantic and who, together with their children, attend the performances of the arts venues around the state that entertain and enlighten us all.

Our sponsorship of the Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture*, SchoolTime and FamilyTime Series at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center is one way we have of demonstrating to our employees and their families that we believe in the ability of the performing arts to improve the quality of life in our cities and in our communities around the state.

To our extended family – our customers around this state who have enjoyed the benefits of the finest telecommunications infrastructure in the nation and perhaps the world – our support of arts programming is a way to give you the opportunity to enrich your lives and the lives of your families.

The arts teach us that cultural diversity enriches our society, that collaboration and teamwork produce remarkable results and that through the arts we come to understand the universality of the human condition, while, at the same time, appreciating what is unique in each individual's achievement.

The *Passport to Culture* series for children and families is a unique opportunity for all of us to experience the wonders of the world around us. As a companion to the experience of live theater, music and dance, this book of essays reminds us that the arts can be enlightening, provocative and great fun.

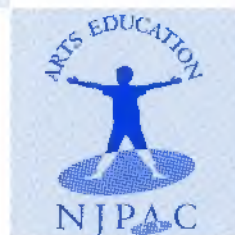
Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter J. Ventimiglia". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter J. Ventimiglia
Vice President - External Affairs
Bell Atlantic - NJ, Inc.



The Performing Arts



New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

PASSPORT TO CULTURE

THE DREAM CATCHERS

by Henriette Major

I have always been fascinated by dreams. Dreams help us confront our fears and explore emotional terrain not traveled by day. For several years now, I have recorded my dreams on index cards, labeled each card with a key word and filed them in alphabetical order. I often turn to my more interesting dreams as a source for my writing.

The dreams of others also captivate me. As an author of children's books, I often meet with groups of young people in schools or libraries and ask them to give me a present – one of their dreams. Over the years, I have collected more than five hundred dreams from children between the ages of six and twelve, and have devised a way of classifying the dreams according to the principal, recurring themes. It is no surprise that familiar figures and elements appear again and again in the dreams of children from vastly different backgrounds.

When André Viens, the director of Théâtre Sans Fil, asked me to write a play for young people, I immediately thought of these children's dreams. I chose the themes mentioned most frequently and combined several dreams in order to develop the action and provide strategies for helping children to deal with their dreams. I also considered the actors who would be staging the play – giant puppets, manipulated by puppeteers – and wrote with them in mind. (See pages 10–11 for more about Théâtre Sans Fil.)

With the script completed, André and I turned to Marc Mongeau, an illustrator of children's books, who translated my descriptions of characters and settings into visual images on paper.

Marc then worked with Jacqueline Larouche and her crew of craftsmen, who constructed the oversized puppets and built the sets. What a thrill to see my imaginary characters come to life as three-dimensional figures.

"The Dream Catchers" is, first and foremost, spectacular entertainment. I do hope, however, that children who see the show will become more aware of their dreams and try to use them in their daily lives to grow and enhance their own creativity. Through the magic of puppets, music and brilliant scenery, "The Dream Catchers" transports children and their families to another dimension and, in the process, brings them that much closer to their own dream world.

Over the past thirty years, Canadian author *Henriette Major* has written more than one hundred books and fifteen television series for young people. "The Dream Catchers" is her first play.

Editor's Note: What better way to launch *Passport to Culture* than to take children on a theatrical journey into the world of fantasy and imagination. NJPAC invited Théâtre Sans Fil, one of the world's finest puppet theater companies, to bring to Victoria Theater "The Dream Catchers," a play written especially for children about the "terrible, strange, sublime and beautiful shapes" that visit them in slumber.¹

The company's giant puppets – constructed from wood, metal, plastic, cables, fiberglass and foam, and draped in richly colored velvet and nylon fabric – enact the subliminal fears and hopes that children everywhere share. While the production is "such stuff/ As dreams are made on," and the vision...."shall dissolve," the universal message of love and peace will remain alive, encouraging children to draw wisdom from their own dreams.²

¹ Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound."

² William Shakespeare's "The Tempest."



"The Dream Catchers."

COMING TOGETHER

by David Shookhoff

Since time immemorial, theater has reflected and replenished the community. Around the evening fire, our early ancestors would reenact portentous current events—a successful hunt, a victorious battle, the birth of a baby, the first signs of spring. These mimetic presentations provided far more than news, for everyone present already knew the facts being depicted. Rather, these enactments reminded the tribe of its common bonds and, by celebrating communal triumphs, empowered the people and strengthened their resolve to persevere despite inevitable difficulties.

Similarly, in classical Greece, citizens flocked to the Theatre of Dionysus for dramatizations of communal myths and legends. In giving theatrical form to familiar stories, the great Athenian playwrights tried to express their sense of the state of the *polis*. This complex society had complex concerns. Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides wrote of the need to balance reason and emotion, the necessity for and failures of the law, the limits of knowledge, the nature of religion and the relationships between the everyday world and the mysterious unknown. These plays provided the audience with a kind of moral and social compass; they helped create consensus about the state of the state.

More than a millennium later, the Elizabethan theater continued to function in much the same way. Shakespeare and his colleagues enlisted their audiences in dramatic depictions of ruptures in the cosmic order, the insufficiency of reason, the power of the imagination and journeys from pride to wisdom. Audiences who attended these works evidently sought and found in them enlightening meditations on their society's beliefs and values.

The dramatic artists of ancient cave times, of classical Greece and of Renaissance England created their work for a homogeneous audience, a unified community of which they were a part. They took for granted a whole range of assumptions about the world, the natural order and humankind's place in it. These common assumptions informed and defined artistic creation, while shared belief systems provided a kind of spiritual baseline that artists could question, challenge, extend or affirm.

The situation today is vastly different and, for the theater artist, far more formidable. Playwrights now write for a diverse, fragmented society. Audiences do not share a common religion, value system or world-



Pushtart Players in "Dear America."

view. Certainly in the West, society has never been more ethnically and culturally disparate. And our vaunted communications technology, which links us to vast stores of information, paradoxically serves to divide and isolate us from each other further. Increasingly, we spend our time with computers or in front of the television; we acquire knowledge at the expense of human contact

How can theater operate in today's fragmented world? How can it serve its age-old communal functions in the absence of a community? The repertoire presented by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) this season begins to suggest some answers

First, theater can reinforce beliefs and values which, however attenuated and vestigial, still resonate for us. Thus two such dissimilar pieces as "The Crown of Destiny," by Théâtre Sans Fil, and "Paul Robeson," presented by Theatreworks USA, both celebrate heroism. One evokes a mythic Scotland of gnomes, giants and fairies, while the other portrays a twentieth century African American battling oppression and racial intolerance. But both works offer definitions of injustice and affirm that individuals can affect society and history in positive ways.

James Still's "And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank," commissioned by the George Street Playhouse and Young Audiences of New Jersey, mines a darker vein. In evoking the horrors of the Holocaust and the legacy of Anne Frank, it confronts an audience with complex questions about group and individual identity, and ultimately testifies to the triumph of hope over despair and the durability of the human spirit. In a far lighter mood, but potent nonetheless, Gould and Stearns' "Simple Gifts" offers a comic reminder of the comforting, unifying effects of holiday traditions

Second, theater can remind us of who we are by suggesting where we came from. Books, film and television can provide information about other times and places. But only theater can fully embody the essential humanity of our forebears and neighbors. The palpable presence of the live actor can drive home the emotional import of the events depicted and the human truths behind the historic facts

Thus, in the Pushcart Players' "Dear America," as we follow the journey of Aunt Trudy's traveling orchestra, we encounter "in the flesh" the suffering and triumphs of some of the ethnic communities and immigrant groups which comprise our country today. This production illustrates how, ultimately, theater can remind us that beneath our unique ethnic identities and rich heritages and traditions, there exists a common humanity that unites us all.



The George Street Playhouse's "And Then They Came for Me."



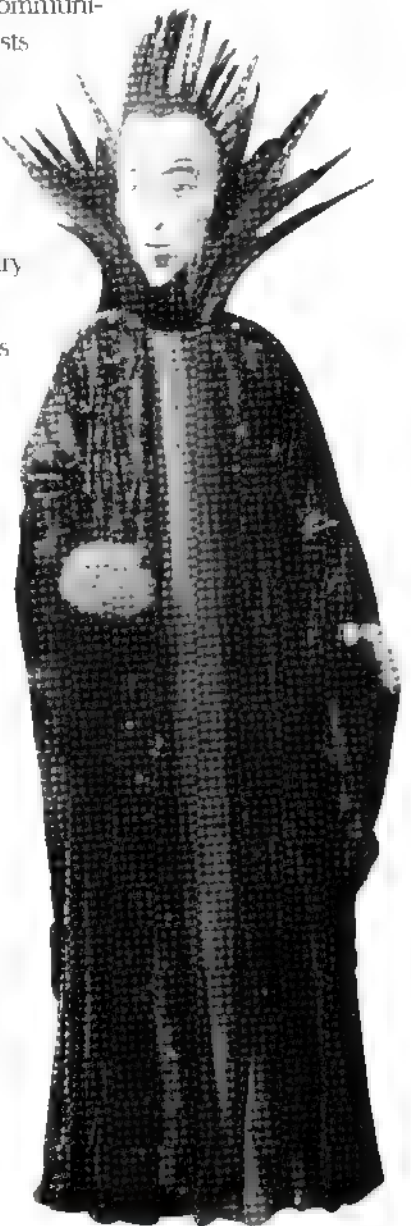
Little Theatre of the Deaf's "World of Whys."

Third, theater celebrates the irrepressible fecundity of the expressive imagination. The works in this year's repertory at NJPAC employ an exuberant array of theatrical styles and genres. The giant puppets in "The Crown of Destiny," the use of multimedia in "And Then They Came for Me," the inventive physicality of "Simple Gifts," and the Sign Language and body language in the Little Theatre of the Deaf's "World of Whys" extend the boundaries of human communication. The theater artists who created these works have developed new languages that augment, even transcend, the spoken word, using a vocabulary of gesture and spectacle

Finally, theater can capitalize on the diversity of today's global village by importing and assimilating expressive traditions from a range of cultures and historical periods. The very fragmentation that tends to isolate us, paradoxically, affords theater artists an unparalleled opportunity for cultural synthesis.

Nowhere is this more evident than in Théâtre Sans Fil's adaptation of the Japanese *Bunraku* puppet theater. The electrifying use of an Asian art form by a French Canadian company to present a Scottish legend is moving testimony to the riches available to culturally sensitive theater artists. Similarly, Gould and Stearns draw on a tradition of physical theater and clowning that dates back to the Italian *commedia dell'arte* and beyond, but have adapted that tradition to create a theater form uniquely American and uniquely their own.

In drawing on these traditions and cultures, theater artists effect a synthesis between the exotic and the ordinary. Most of the works presented this season proceed from homey impulses: two men on a trip are homesick, a girl seeks help with her schoolwork, a traveler makes an acquaintance. These commonplace experiences are expressed artistically through the use of theatrical traditions and forms alluded to above; in so doing, the theater artists effect a connection between the audience's daily lives and a universe of lives in other times and places.



*Théâtre Sans Fil's
"The Crown of Destiny."*

As we watch medieval clowns cavort in a motel, or giant puppets invade a living room, we become aware of intersections between our immediate experience and a larger world that extends outward in time and space. Our isolation is reduced; our sense of community is enlarged.

So, in fact, theater today retains its primal function. In a sense, it is more necessary now than ever. Because it can no longer presuppose an existing social order, at each performance it must forge a new community from the diverse elements in today's audiences. By using an extraordinary range of resources now available to theater artists, theater often rises to this new challenge.



Gould and Stearns in "Simple Gifts."

Theater audiences attending the New Jersey Performing Arts Center will discover that for the hour or two they spend together in a darkened theater, differences will diminish, common values will be affirmed and, for a while at least, the community will be renewed.

As director of education for the Manhattan Theatre Club, *David Shookhoff* created and oversees an arts education program that currently serves more than forty schools in the New York-metropolitan area. He is treasurer of the New York City Arts-in-Education Roundtable, serves on the Executive Committee of the Center for Arts Education, and has chaired and served on numerous panels for the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. A consultant with the Lincoln Center Institute and the Theatre Development Fund, he has directed more than sixty plays and operas in New York City and with resident companies around the country.

No Strings

by David Shookhoff



When a group of eager drama students at the University of Quebec demanded a puppetry workshop more than twenty-five years ago, they hardly suspected they were sowing the seeds for a world-renowned theater company. In pursuing their interest, these young artists – among them a visionary named André Viens – became particularly fascinated with a unique and venerable tradition of puppet theater, the Japanese *Bunraku*.

Bunraku puppets, each about three feet tall, are manipulated by onstage puppeteers, who wear black to signify invisibility. The performance text is recited by offstage actors; music is also a key element



Gorla (left) and Katie in "The Crown of Destiny."

Stereo quadraphonic soundtracks complete with commissioned scores, synthesized sounds and recorded voices. Spectacular scenic effects – battles, storms, fireworks and the like – became a hallmark. The company's performances today are multimedia extravaganzas, utilizing projections, black light (ultraviolet light for glow in the dark effects), computerized vari-lights (lighting instruments rigged to pivot and swivel), dry ice and other devices to dazzling effect

As students and later as professionals, Viens and his colleagues adapted these conventions to their own practical and artistic needs. A youthful experiment in construction resulted in puppets standing six feet high instead of the customary three. Unabashed, the young artists, who later named their company Théâtre Sans Fil (Theatre Without Strings), discovered that in big auditoriums the large puppets were easier to see. Their puppets began to grow further, in some cases to gigantic proportions. They also became more intricate and fantastical, fabulous creatures – monsters, giants, elves and ogres – began to inhabit the stages of Théâtre Sans Fil (TSF) with increasing regularity.

The Japanese traditions of off stage narrators and acoustic music evolved into complex Dolby-

"The Crown of Destiny," one of the company's offerings at NJPAC this inaugural season, is an amalgamation of Scottish myths and legends that enlist TSF's customary array of villains, heroes, sorceresses and monsters to tell a tale of right triumphing over tyranny. The program was inspired by TSF's visit to Scotland, where the company was invited to present puppetry workshops several years ago.

And why puppets instead of live actors? Puppets are like us but are more than we are. Though they resemble humans, they defy human limitations: they can fly, they can contort themselves, they can assume innumerable shapes and sizes. Acrobatic stunts that would require years of training for an actor are effected with a few flicks of a puppeteer's wrist. What human troupe could render a battle with a sea monster as powerfully as TSF's creations of cloth and wood? Puppets are idealizations of ourselves, they are ourselves in our dreams. As Viens puts it, "These wonderful creatures can create wonderful things."

Indeed, the idea of dream and fantasy is essential to TSF's exuberant aesthetic. Their productions give life to worlds we have perhaps imagined but have never seen. Through the synthesis of many arts – design, sculpture, drama, music and choreography – the company aspires to expand the boundaries of theatrical possibility and with it the capacities of the human imagination. Théâtre Sans Fil aims, in its director's words, "to transport the audience out of their seats into another world."



Characters from "The Crown of Destiny."

David Shookhoff is director of education for the Manhattan Theater Club

THE MUSIC OF AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES

by Angela M. S. Nelson, Ph.D.

M

usic plays an important role in the life of all communities. It provides entertainment, facilitates communication and affirms communal values, traditions and heritages. The musical traditions of African American and Latino communities in the United States have served these roles for generations, and have spawned such rich American music as spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, reggae, disco, rap, house, *bomba*, *plena* and salsa, many of which can be heard in the concert halls of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center this inaugural season.

African Americans in the United States have a long and diverse history of artistic expressions that draw on a reservoir of Afrocentric idioms. These idioms have informed the Black aesthetic and reflect the common values, behaviors and creative productions of the people of the Black diaspora.



Sweet Honey in the Rock.

Disaporan Africans have a value system that honors rhythm, percussiveness and call-and-response in its creative works. Rhythm refers to any kind of movement characterized by the regular recurrence of strong elements (long notes or long tones) and weak elements (short notes and short tones) in various combinations and shifting patterns of duration, which generate strong, rhythmic impulses.

Percussiveness is an African approach to speaking and singing and playing instruments. It is related to the concept of "percussion," as in percussion instruments, such as drums, tambourines and piano, that can be rubbed, shaken, struck, scraped or scratched. Many African Americans speak and sing percussively – that is, with great vitality and force – and play all instruments as if they were percussion instruments.

Call and-response is a mode of discourse rooted in traditional African culture. It involves the spontaneous verbal interactions between speakers/singers and their audiences. All of the "calls" are punctuated by "responses" from the listeners. This call and response technique is

evident in many Black spirituals, where entire phrases or verses are sung or spoken by the leader and, subsequently, are either repeated verbatim or altered somewhat by the audience or chorus.

African American and Latino musicians also use the call-and-response tradition with their instruments. For example, in the traditional African-based *bomba* music of Puerto Rico, a male and female dancer approach the *bomba* drums and take turns dancing a kind of "conversation" or "challenge" with the lead drummer. As the dancers move, the drummer responds with a rhythmic pattern on the drum. Another call-and-response technique found in Black and Latino music occurs when musicians respond to their own statements with vocal nonarticulations and vocal improvisations on standard melodic lines.

The heavy reliance on rhythm, percussiveness and call and-response in Black and Latino music not only preserves an aesthetic tradition but also supports and strengthens an African worldview that promotes collectivism, cooperation, interdependence and spirituality.

The culture, history and religion of African Americans have also greatly influenced Black and Latino music. In response to racism and discrimination, segregation and oppression, African American communities, in particular, birthed sacred and secular music that affirmed their culture, expressed their trials and tribulations, celebrated their victories and articulated their hopes and dreams. In the realm of sacred music, for example, spirituals and gospel sung in Black churches throughout the country emanated from the reality of struggle and a need to survive, and were shaped by the doctrines of Christianity. Celebrating the struggle and survival of African Americans, Universal Language, featured in NJPAC's *Passport to Culture*, highlights the central values and beliefs of Black communities in its presentation "Kwanzaa Festival" and emphasizes the performance of African music and its influence on other cultures.

African American spirituals emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when most Africans in the New World were in permanent bondage. These spirituals, like other slave folk songs – field hollers, folk hero ballads, work songs and secular songs of caution, complaint, derision, satire or praise – were communally composed, growing out of a specific social context, and tended to have both an underlying thematic unity and regional individuality.



Universal Language.



Return to the Source.

The social contexts unique to African Americans, dating back to their roots in Africa, play an important part in the performances of *Return to the Source*. Founded in 1985, this musical ensemble seeks to affirm the creative and artistic expressions of African American people by chronicling and celebrating the history of African American music.

Gospel music, a modern version of spirituals, developed from Blacks who migrated from rural to urban communities in the early twentieth century and evolved out of the Black sacred repertoire and song style of the nineteenth century. Gospel is both a repertoire and a style of singing. Characteristics of gospel music include congregational style singing, driving rhythms and percussive instrumental accompaniment. Furthermore, as seen in the performances of *Sweet Honey in the Rock*, gospel also emphasizes vocal rhythms, diverse vocal textures and call-and-response patterns.

Blues, jazz, rhythm and blues and rap took Black music beyond the church into secular culture in the

United States. Blues was essentially the secular counterpart to the spirituals, having its origins in the Mississippi Delta during slavery. Unlike the spirituals, blues was neither concerned with the righteousness of a good God nor with the hope of a home in heaven. Rather, it focused thematically on the social conditions, concerns and conflicts among working-class Blacks, including male female relationships. Jazz is an instrumental extension of the blues in that it borrows the twelve measure, three line structure of many standard blues compositions and emphasizes improvised instrumental music.

Rhythm and blues (R&B) was the first significant form of Black popular music to emerge in the 1930s and '40s. It was greatly influenced by blues, jazz and gospel and rapidly grew in popularity following World War II. While there have been peaks and valleys in the life of R&B, its influence on American music is still evident today.

Finally, in the 1980s, rap music was introduced to a national audience and carried much of the same thematic content found in blues. Musically, rap consists of lyrics spoken or sung over intricate, percussive rhythms. Rap's influence now spans the world, and it, along with blues, jazz and R&B, continues the tradition and heritage of rhythm, percussiveness and call-and-response.

In Latino communities, various religions and diverse forms of musical expression have developed outside of Christianity. While a Black aesthetic connects Latino and African American communities musically, there exist significant, distinct Latino music forms, such as salsa, *bomba* and *plena*, which still have West African roots.

In Spanish, the word *salsa* means "sauce," and the style that gave shape to salsa was the Cuban *son montuno*. The *montuno* is an important section of a salsa tune in which the singer improvises while other musicians play repetitive, percussive patterns. The unique

sound of the Cuban *son* is a result of the combination of the stringed instruments, folk melodies and poetry used by the Spanish-descended *campesinos* (rural peasant farmers) and the rhythmic elements derived from enslaved Africans. With the abolition of slavery in Cuba around 1880, the merger of the musical styles of Spain and Africa began to evolve into *son*. The music ensemble Salsa Festival explores the Afro-Cuban roots of salsa music by using a variety of jazz and authentic Latin percussion instruments and demonstrating the techniques of *son* and salsa



Salsa Festival.

The Puerto Rican traditions of *bomba* and *plena* developed in the coastal towns, where the presence of the sugar mills created a need for the importation of African workers. The chief musical influence from Africa in this Latin music has been rhythm. The variety of drums and other percussion instruments and the pervasiveness and complexity of the rhythmic underpinning set Afro-Caribbean music apart from all other North American Latino music.



Los Pleneros de la 21.

This point is evident in the performances of Los Pleneros de la 21. Founded in 1983, this group seeks to continue the tradition of *bomba* and *plena*, and to promote an appreciation of folk music and ethnic traditions as reflections of cultural heritage and cultural pride.

The musical traditions of African Americans and Latinos in the United States have produced many forms and styles of music and have helped globalize the sound of music in the late twentieth century. As we move into the twenty first century, the principles of collectivism, cooperation, interde-

pendence and spirituality will no doubt continue to ground the music of Blacks and Latinos and become a viable strategy for improving global and local social relations.

Angela M S Nelson, Ph D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Popular Culture at Bowling Green State University, where she received her doctorate in American Culture Studies. She has taught popular culture, ethnic studies, music and television and has contributed to *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* (1992), *Black Sacred Music: A Journal of Theomusicology* (1991 and 1994), and *Christian History* (1991). She is editor of a forthcoming book entitled *This Is How We Flow: Rhythm in Black Cultures* (University of South Carolina Press).

Bernice Johnson Reagon: In Her Own Voice

Interview conducted by Geoffrey Himes for *Sing Out!* Vol. 38 #1, 1993. Reprinted by permission of Geoffrey Himes.

"I grew up in a Black church in rural Georgia, where there was a structure to the ritual. They never passed out a list of hymns, and the congregation never knew what they were going to sing. Instead the service came out of the person who led the songs; it came up out of what the person needed to say, and it was up to the congregation to help that person say it."

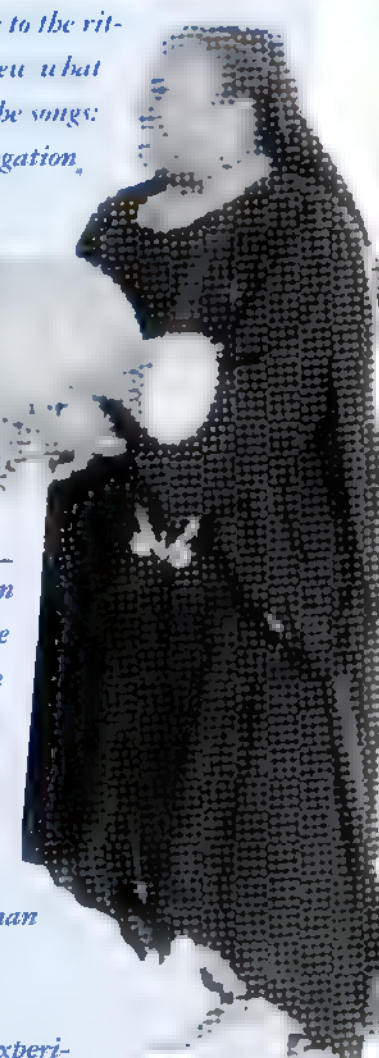
"In a sense, each Sweet Honey in the Rock concert is just like that... a composition by the programmer. When I'm programming, I don't consult anybody else, and the other members don't know what we're going to sing until we're onstage. I call the songs that say what I want to say that particular evening, using the language of the Sweet Honey repertoire, and the other singers service the composition. It's a leap of faith."

"In the context of Black culture, you have to do more than pass on what's been passed on to you. You have to document your living experience as part of the chain of Black existence. You're not just passing on the old material; you're creating new material and passing that on with the old material... Why shouldn't we use rap? It's part of our culture, just like blues, spirituals, gospel, jazz. It's ours, so we use it to express ourselves."

"When I started the group I knew I wanted a format that had range to it. I wanted in the course of a concert to be able to cover all the layers that human beings go through in our society. We always want to be speaking to some of the specific issues of our time; as African Americans we always want to represent songs from the history of our struggle. But as people we also experience love and sadness, and we want to represent that, too, as part of the whole spectrum of human experience."

"When I approach Black music as a historian, I try to maintain the integrity of the song as I first learned it or as it was first created. Sometimes the only way you can get a reading of the African American community's expression is to look at the oral outpourings, whether they be songs, stories or testimonies. As a performer, there are certain songs I don't change from the way I first learned them, because they still sound right that way to me."

"But it's not an ironclad law that I won't change my old songs... finding a three-hundred-year-old song and doing it exactly the same way every time is not true to the African American tradition. So I prefer the term 'community-based expression,' music that comes out of the community and expresses where they were and where they are."



MEET THE ORCHESTRA

by Judith Nachison

Music is a form of expression that grows out of our most basic human need to communicate. The first thing babies do, on the way to speech, is to croon the melodies of the languages that surround them. Among the oldest known implements left by our human ancestors are primitive bone flutes and drumming sticks. This need to express ourselves and to communicate ideas, sensibilities and feelings in a form that transcends words is present across all time and in all human societies.

Many societies have developed sophisticated musical forms that are principally transmitted person to person. The modern symphony orchestra is the result of a historical evolution that combined technological development of the instruments with sophisticated methods of writing and recording music. This technology has made its repertoire accessible for listening and for performing by people around the world.

Through music we can speak to each other in an essential language. However, as in all languages, music has its conventions, syntax and structure. To become truly fluent, we need to get inside the music.

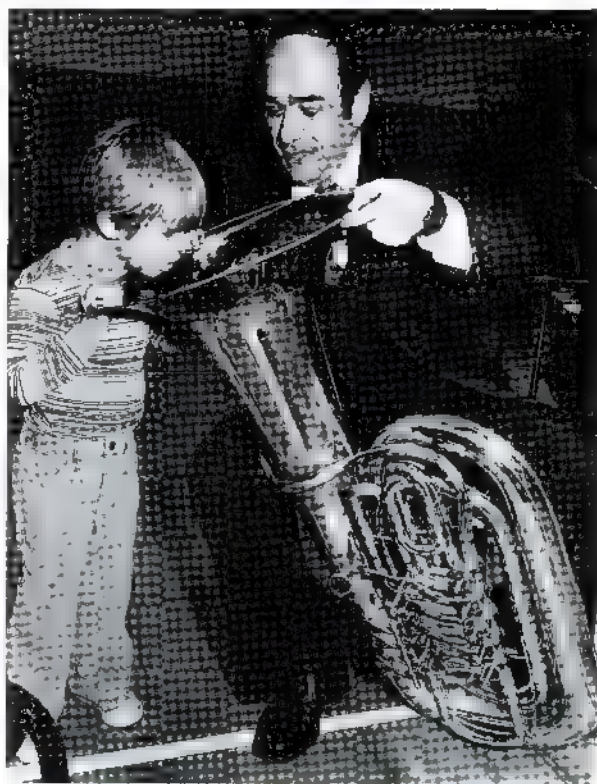
Learning the language of music should start early in life. Scientists are discovering that learning music at a young age builds on knowledge that comes naturally and supports the development of intellectual skills that lead to higher levels of academic achievement in other curriculum areas.

The repertoire the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra selects each year for its Young People's Concerts and Spotlight Concerts engages young audiences in a delightful exploration of the world of orchestral music, while the performances illuminate the versatility and virtuosity of the musicians of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra.

In the 1997-1998 season, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra presents *MUSIC IN LIVING COLOR: Unlocking the Secrets of the Great Tone Painters* for students in grades four through eight, and *PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION: Music in Motion* for students in grades K through six. Both programs, along with the teachers' resource guides, encourage audience members to ask the following questions:

- What was happening in the composers' lives and in their world when they wrote the music?
- How do we connect their experiences to our lives and the world in which we live?
- What elements of music and musical techniques were used to express the composers' ideas?
- What are the instruments doing individually and collectively?

When the conductor lowers his baton, and the instruments are packed away, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra hopes that the music will stay with the children and that the "lessons" they have learned will connect with their lives at home and in school.



NJSO member Pat Landolfi and friend.

BEYOND WORDS

by Elizabeth Kendall

The lights dim, the curtain rises. Onstage, a fisherman in a shimmering metallic cape wanders in semidarkness, searching for something. Suddenly, from the back of the stage, five women in peach-colored robes appear, enveloped in a glowing light. To the sound of a bamboo flute, they begin to weave their arms gently and undulate. The fisherman stands in awe.

Through dance, choreographer Nai Ni Chen retells an ancient Chinese legend in her composition "Peach Flower Landscape." If it were a play and the performers were talking to one another, only the Chinese-speaking members of the audience would be able to understand the tale. But because it is a dance and the dancers are talking with their bodies, we know instinctively, through

our bodies, that this man feels great sadness, and that his sudden vision of the maidens brings him joy. The narrative is conveyed through the dancers' movements, the music, the costumes, the lighting – all the elements that make up a dance performance and appeal not just to our reasoning brains but to a deeper kind of reasoning that lies in our senses.

Dance is an art form older than words. It may well be among the first "art" that human beings ever created, the first way people discovered they could respond to a universe that was always in motion – with its sun and wind, its millions of stars in the night sky, its changing seasons.

Excavations of the past offer some proof that dance was one of the first art forms. Nomadic people who lived thousands of years ago, left behind pictures of their lives painted inside caves, on the faces of rocks and on the sides of ceramic jars. Most of these scenes show wild bison, mammoths and horses running, with small stick figures often hunting these animals. A few paintings depict only human figures dancing.



Nai-Ni Chen in "Peach Flower Landscape."

In the rugged mountains of Southern Spain, at a ten thousand-year-old site called Barranco de los Grajos, a painting on a rock features women in procession, their torsos bending in different ways, their arms upraised in a range of dramatic gestures. At another ancient site called Sun Chia Chai, in the Chinese province of Chinghai, archaeologists have dug up ceramic jars dating back four thousand years, which depict dancers with arms joined together and feet stamping, while musicians play instruments in the background.

No one knows what these ancient people were dancing about, or what their music sounded like. What we can be sure of is that their gestures told some kind of ritual story – the precious story of their lives. Before humans could write, they used dance to work out the ideas they felt were vitally important to their daily existence, expressing who they were, where they were, and how they should communicate their awe at being alive.

History sped forward; towns, cities, whole civilizations sprouted around the globe, each with its own manners, customs, costumes and languages – and each with its own intricate system of dance.

In European classical ballet, which first solidified in the French court of Louis XIV, the body is held very high and stiff, as if it wants to take off and fly. Feet move in complicated steps, legs execute small, precise leaps, and the head makes bowing gestures.

In African classical dance, the body seems to take strength from the ground; dancers keep their knees bent and articulate different parts of their torsos – shoulders, ribs, pelvis – in counterpoint to the beat. In Chinese traditional dance, the dancers' bodies seem to be tracing invisible patterns of circles and spirals; even the sleeves of their costumes trace circular patterns that have intricate meanings.

While these dance traditions differ vastly from one another, they all require discipline, concentration and years of training, so the dancers can move their bodies in ways that make the rest of us catch our breath from the beauty of it. Each tradition also carries a core of ancient, physical wisdom that every person, regardless of nationality, can understand.

The dance repertoire presented in the inaugural season of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center is both universal and varied, and demonstrates that what we know in our bodies transcends words.



American Ballet Theatre's Susan Jaffe in "Symphonie Concertante."



American Repertory Ballet's "Our Town."

Americas, with their own cities and rituals and dances. Along came the Spanish, French, English and Portuguese, who fought and subdued them. Then came shiploads of African slaves, abducted from their own continent

These groups of people had much reason to hate one another, yet their dancing and music intermingled. In the Americas, upright European bodies started to undulate; undulating African bodies started to lift up and stamp. Indian flutes adopted Spanish themes; Indian bodies borrowed Spanish and African attitudes.

Ballet Hispanico, a New York-based dance company, likes to explore the dance mixtures that happened in the Spanish part of the New World, in Mexico, South America, the Caribbean and some parts of North America. Their energetic dance medley called "Viva Las Americas" draws from African, Indian and European dance traditions including *shango*, *los viejtos*, *samba*, *punta*, *jarocho* and *mambo*. "Viva Las Americas" makes our blood heat

That is why it is easy to forget, while we are watching the American Repertory Ballet perform "Our Town," that the dancers are speaking to us in ballet language. We might not understand the French words for such ballet terms as *plié*, *tendu* and *arabesque*, but in the hands of a skilled choreographer like Phillip Jerry, these movements go directly to our hearts and minds. The narrative dance communicates the beautiful and painful message of Thornton Wilder's classic play about love and loss. No one in the audience has trouble equating the feeling of yearning with the reaching shape of an *arabesque*, when the dancer's body stretches out as if in flight, one leg raised behind, arms stretching out in front.

So, even if dance traditions are intensely particular, the art is universal. It is such a universal art, in fact, that dance languages throughout history could not help talking to one another, even when the people who did the dancing were enemies.

Our American continents illustrate this point well. Five hundred years ago, whole populations of Indians lived in the

up, even as it succeeds in imparting a wealth of information about the patterns of the New World. The Brazilian *shango* reflects almost an all African influence, it is a religious dance from the African Yoruba people, accompanied by quick drumbeats. *Mambo*, from Cuba, combines Spanish dance shapes with African percussion rhythms

In the English-speaking United States, blended dance traditions produced one of the most beloved dance forms of all times, tap. Forbidden to beat their drums because their white enslavers thought the drums could talk, Africans in the New World used their feet to beat out the rhythms they had brought from home, the same rhythms that created jazz music. White dancers later borrowed this art form for minstrel shows. Black dancers borrowed it back



Ballet Hispanico in "Viva Las Americas."



Members of The New Jersey Tap Ensemble.

"Single shuffle, double shuffle, cut and cross cut, snapping his fingers, turning in his knees, presenting the backs of his legs in front, spinning about on his toes and heels...." wrote the English novelist Charles Dickens in 1842. Dickens was thrilled when someone took him to New York City to see one of the great Black dancers of the day, William Henry Lane, nicknamed "Juba." Now tap has become a "classical" tradition itself.

Deborah Mitchell, founder of The New Jersey Tap Ensemble, studied with tapper Leslie "Bubber" Gaines, who himself studied with a mentor, who studied with his mentor, going back in time to Juba himself. A century and a half after Juba's heyday, the Ensemble's kids could probably reproduce the dance Dickens saw – and then some.

In the midst of all this borrowing back and forth, our continent gave birth to one more crucial dance idea: that a person could reject her ancestors' form of dance and create her own. This development took root at the turn of the century, when two young women, Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis, rejected the confinements of ballet costumes and ballet steps and resolved to find a dance that expressed the new world, not the old. Ironically, they both turned to the past for inspiration: Duncan, to what she thought were the Greek classics; St. Denis, to the "Oriental" tradition. Critics referred to these "new" dance forms as "modern dance."



The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in "Shelter."

In the footsteps of Duncan and St. Denis came such legendary figures as Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham and Paul Taylor, all of whom founded dance companies, and, in the late '50s, Alvin Ailey, a young African American, who wanted his company to have access to every kind of dance. Ailey created seventy-nine ballets during his lifetime, but he maintained that his company was not exclusively a repository of his own work.

He envisioned a company that presented important works of the past and commissioned new ones.

Now under the artistic direction of Judith Jamison, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater honors Ailey's vision of a company dedicated to the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance heritage and the uniqueness of Black cultural expression. At the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, students receive training in every dance form imaginable including modern dance techniques, ballet, West African rhythms, tap and yoga. And the brilliant young dancers who make the leap from the studio to the stage as members of the professional Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble or the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater become the vehicle that brings to life the dance compositions created by the very best contemporary choreographers representing all traditions.

ODC, San Francisco, originally called the Oberlin Dance Collective, marks an even more recent stage in dance, the "postmodern" tradition. In the rebellious '60s, dancers decided

that all this training was hokus pokus; ordinary people could dance just fine. Guided by its three choreographers, who met through the Oberlin College Dance Department in the early '70s, ODC favors "pedestrian movement," such as running, walking and jumping, but cleverly incorporates ballet virtuosity.

The company also tries to use dance to restore missing values to our troubled culture. One day, ODC choreographer KT Nelson's little boy asked her to buy him another new toy. Instead, she told him the story of an old toy – a stuffed rabbit – who comes to life because the little boy who owns him loves him so much. The story was Margery Williams' beloved children's book, *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Children's books, thought Nelson, are the myths of our time.

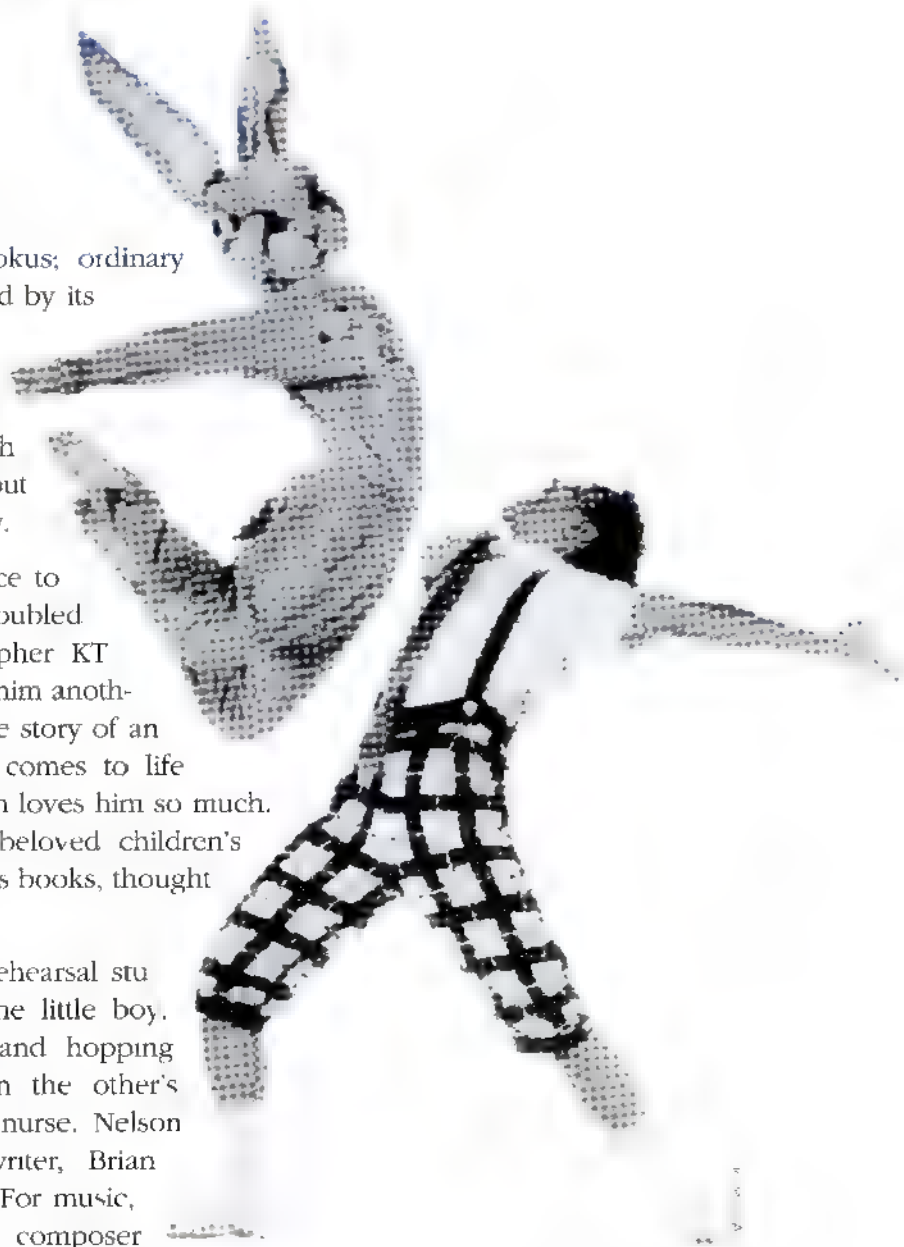
Nelson took her dancers into the rehearsal studio. One played the rabbit, one the little boy. They experimented with leaping and hopping movements. Two dancers, one on the other's shoulders, were cast as Nana, the nurse. Nelson asked another children's book writer, Brian Wildsmith, to make their costumes. For music, she picked pieces by the English composer Benjamin Britten, because he had "a classical edge, but was playful, too." Lighting designer

ODC/San Francisco's "*The Velveteen Rabbit*."

David Elio created dramatic lighting sequences. And thus was born a new piece of dance narrative that is now a modern classic.

Thousands of years from now, when archaeologists dig up our cities, buried under newer cities, they may find, in the rubble of a theater, a scrap of "The Velveteen Rabbit" T shirt that ODC sells when it performs the dance. "Rabbits were important to those ancient people," they will say wisely to each other, "especially dancing rabbits."

Elizabeth Kendall is a dance and culture critic based in New York who has written for the *New York Times*, *Dance* magazine, and countless other publications. She is the author of *Where She Danced* and *The Runaway Bride: Hollywood Romantic Comedy of the 1930's*, and is currently at work on a family memoir forthcoming from Random House.



WINTER FESTIVAL

WINTER HOLIDAYS:

CONNECTING THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

by Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D.

The planet completes its celestial orbit and we turn the calendar's page to mark the winter holiday season anew. Once again, the time has come to retell ancient stories, display precious heirlooms and stage familiar rituals with a gathering of family and friends. And the food! Special meals prepared annually and presented in festive opulence strengthen the ties that bind us. Repetition is the key that establishes a sense of order and continuity. We are home again.

The holidays' emotionally powerful narratives continually update our collective identity by connecting the mythic and the historic to the present. Such is the case with each of the winter festivals: Hanukkah's tale of victory over a foreign oppressor and the miraculous rekindling of the sacred covenant with God; the humble birth of the divine incarnate that is Christmas; the universal appeal of the gift as represented by Three Kings Day on January sixth; and Kwanzaa's reaffirmation of basic principles in the face of historic tribulations and continued determination.

These winter holidays are a time of magical juxtapositions as witnessed in nature's movement indoors in the form of the Christmas tree or Kwanzaa's references to the rural harvest. This is equally true of the symbolic use of light to illuminate the darkest time of the year. In an age of electricity, wax candles ceremoniously lit produce a primal stirring of intimacy and enchantment. The brilliance of divine light and blinding revelation reverberates with each flickering taper or each twinkling bulb.

As the years pass, we maintain or discard traditions depending on their continued relevance to our lives. We give new meanings to inherited stories, objects and rituals. Again and again, the winter holidays complete the circle that returns us to our ever changing selves.

Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D. is a folklorist who has researched and written about ethnic holidays in the New York-metropolitan area for close to twenty years. He is a former coordinator for ArtReach New Jersey, a program that links community-based artists and mainstream arts institutions.

AMERICAN CHRISTMAS IN THE ITALIAN AND FILIPINO COMMUNITIES

by Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D.

A

mid the conspicuous consumption that characterizes American Christmas, Christians endeavor to celebrate the birth of Jesus in ways that speak to their spiritual concerns while strengthening families and communities. Maintaining and adapting old traditions to reflect present day lives is especially important for immigrant families making their way in a new and estranging environment.



The Sciorra Family celebrates Christmas with special delicacies.

One of the greatest joys of my childhood was to unpack and set up the miniature figurines for the holiday *crèche*. In the Italian tradition, the *crèche* is more than a simple manger scene with the Holy Family and Three Wise Men. The *presepio*, as it is called, is the full constellation of ceramic figures that includes the scores of townspeople going about their everyday lives, oblivious to the humble birth of the Christ child.

To this day, my immigrant father continues to landscape the lilliputian diorama with brown grocery bags for mountains, a carpet of dried moss and cardboard buildings with cotton ball smoke wafting from the chimneys. Each year, ancient Bethlehem and a nineteenth century Italian mountain town are evoked in a single image on the living-room floor in my parents' Brooklyn home.

While our *presepio* follows many of the unwritten rules of *crèche* display, my family gives a personal touch to the miniature recreation of the first Christmas. For decades, my father included a tiny metal figure of an Alpine skier on the paper-bag slopes as a symbolic self portrait set in his hometown of Carunchio. When my parents weren't looking, I would move the frozen figurines to enact the sacred narrative depicted to scale and create my own playful theatrics, which wreaked havoc on the bucolic setting. In a similar gesture, my younger brother John would hide *Star Wars* characters among the livestock or the townspeople. The mixing of

Italian and American holiday customs was most evident in the electric train set that encircled our *presepio* and issued whistles and puffs of smoke as it passed the Nativity manger.

For members of New Jersey's Filipino community, the rich cultural *mélange* celebrated during the Christmas season reflects the legacy of the historical colonization of the Asian archipelago first by Spain and later by the United States. Immigration to the U.S. has added another dimension to a heritage of cultural and religious adaptations.

Christmas Eve is the focus of the holiday season for Ameurfina Nazario of Morristown and her family members. In the Philippines, Ameurfina attended nightly mass in nine different churches within walking distance, as part of a *novena*. Here in America, the circuit of *simbang gabi* masses is done in a car traveling the New Jersey Turnpike and other roadways. The first mass is held at the Filipino Consulate in New York City, followed by churches in Edison, Jersey City, New Brunswick and Piscataway.

At these services, Ameurfina and other family members perform a repertoire of Spanish, Anglo-Saxon and Filipino Christmas carols as part of the Filipino band Alay Philippine Performing Arts Rondalla. Members of the band play string instruments of various sizes that include the *bandurria*, *octavina* and guitar. Both "Silent Night" and "Payapang Daig dig" express the hope of peace that Christmas represents. "Noche Buena" nostalgically recounts Christmas, as celebrated in the homeland, from the perspective of two young lovers, who though poor, rejoice in the gathering of family and good food. "Ang Pasko Ay Sumapit" proclaims that "Christmas Is Here," and we should reconcile our differences in the name of humanity.

Throughout the holiday season, festive lights burn in the form of the *parol*, or "Christmas Lanterns." Ameurfina's mother made the family *parols* in the shape of a five point star with two trailing tails to symbolize the star of Bethlehem. Translucent colored paper is layered over a bamboo frame, and the lanterns are lit by an electric lightbulb, shining from the windows of Ameurfina's Morristown home.

Time, distance and money often make it difficult for families to maintain their connections to one another. At Christmas, it is the simple traditions that often prove most effective in binding individuals and communities together.

Joseph U. Sciorra, Ph.D., is a folklorist who has researched and written about ethnic holidays in the New York metropolitan area for close to twenty years.

PROMESA DE REYES

by Ruth E. Lugo, Ph.D.

The traditional Catholic holiday of Three Kings Day, or the Epiphany, originated in Spain and today is celebrated on the sixth of January as a national holiday in all Latin American countries.

In Puerto Rico, on the afternoon of January fifth, children traditionally prepare for the Three Wise Men's visit by placing cut and tied grass in cardboard boxes and putting the boxes under their beds, beside vessels filled with water, to feed and refresh the camels. While the children are sleeping, parents carefully discard these items, and if any grass or water is found the next day, parents tell the children that the Three Kings must have dropped them along the way.

Although the Epiphany is an important celebration in the cities of Puerto Rico, this festive religious occasion takes on added color in the countryside. Family and friends gather together to eat special foods and enjoy music traditionally performed during this holiday.

Guests are treated to homemade traditional desserts such as *arroz con dulce* (rice pudding), *majarete* (cream of rice), *almojabanas* (fried-rice dumplings) and piping hot black coffee. Wooden trays are filled with these desserts and placed on shelves prepared especially for the occasion the day before. The fried rice dumplings are stored in huge barrels.

Musicians improvise on the six string guitar; the smaller, ten-string guitar called a *cuatro*; the bass; *maracas*; and the *guiro*, which is made from a plant; they sing religious songs called *aguinaldos*.



Ruth E. Lugo and her "Three Kings," sculpted by contemporary Puerto Rican sculptor Azuetz.

In some instances, the celebration of a *promesa*, or "vow," is held during the Epiphany festivities in order to fulfill a promise to a loved one, living or dead. I witnessed a Three Kings Day *promesa* in January 1997 in Ciales, a town in Puerto Rico's central mountain range. The altar, which occupied the living room, consisted of a large table covered with a hand-embroidered white linen cloth. Two sets of carved wooden statues of the Three Kings, mounted on horses, occupied the center of the table, surrounded by candles, a miniature manger, and a colorful ceramic plate, which had painted images of the Magi. An arch of reeds woven with perfumed flowers framed the altar.

The hostess, a ninety-year-old *abuela*, or "grandmother," was fulfilling the *promesa* in her father's memory and welcomed an influx of family members, friends, and other visitors throughout the day.

In Puerto Rico, the Epiphany celebration is also known as *Las Octavas* because it lasts eight days, making the Christmas season in Puerto Rico the longest in the Spanish-speaking world.

Long Live the Three Kings! *Que Vivan Los Tres Reyes Magos!*

Ruth E. Lugo, Ph.D. is a professor of Hispanic language and literature and dean of student affairs at the City University of New York at La Guardia. President of R. L. Associates, an artistic, cultural and educational management consulting firm. Dr. Lugo also serves as president of the New Jersey Chamber Music Society and is a trustee of Bloomfield College.

HANUKKAH: THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

by Susan Schnur

A

t the darkest, coldest, sunless time of year, Hanukkah - only one of many solstice-originating holidays - brings to the world two stouthearted messages: fight for freedom, and do not despair, for out of darkness, courageous people can always create light.

The first message - fight for freedom - derives from a kind of revolutionary war that took place in ancient Israel almost two thousand years ago, when the imperialist Greeks placed all kinds of cruel restrictions on the Jewish people, forbidding them to practice their religion and punishing them for being different.

A group of Jews formed themselves into little bands of guerrilla warriors called *Maccabees*, which means "hammers" in Hebrew. For three years, these "hammers" struck out at the powerful Greeks, fighting from their hideouts in caves, forests and mountain crags, until they finally routed the Greek soldiers. In celebration, the first thing the Jewish people did was to return to their Holy Temple in Jerusalem, where they discovered an "unholy" mess

After they cleaned the Temple and made it pure, they went to light the Temple's sacred lamps but could find only a tiny bit of holy oil. Desperate, they lit what little oil they had, which was enough to keep the *menorah* burning for one day. But God sent a great miracle that kept their little flame burning for eight whole days, and gave them the time they needed to prepare new oil.



Children especially enjoy lighting the menorah.

Today, Jews around the world celebrate Hanukkah, the Festival of Light, for eight days, recalling the victory of the Maccabees and God's miracle of light. We gather in our homes to light the *menorah*, called a *chanukiah*, and use a *shamash*, or "helping candle," to light one candle the first night, two candles the second night and so on.

As the flames burn, we are not allowed to do any work—no homework, dish washing, phone answering, nothing. Instead we chant songs, tell stories, guess which candle will burn the longest, play with a spinning top called a *dreidel*, and eat foods cooked in oil like potato latkes (pancakes) and doughnuts. We sit in shadowy rooms watching the candles flicker, and we talk about freedom and the power of light.

Hanukkah means "rededication." During this holiday, we rededicate ourselves to bringing light back into the world through the sacrament of candles and prayer, through the celebration of our Jewish faith and traditions, and through rededication to the principles of religious and cultural freedom for all. We rededicate ourselves to our religious duty of finding common cause with those who, by virtue of their differences, are often discriminated against, and we give spiritual thought to how differences are often strengths in disguise.

Susan Schnur is a rabbi and a writer. An editor of *Lilith*, a national independent Jewish women's magazine, Rabbi Schnur has written for many publications including the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *U.S.A. Today* and others.

KWANZAA: CONTINUITY, UNITY AND HOPE

by Gayle T. Tate, Ph.D.

Kwanzaa, a Swahili term that connotes the "first fruits of the harvest," is an African American cultural holiday that has become increasingly popular since its inception over thirty years ago. Now celebrated by more than five million African Americans, Kwanzaa is also the cultural holiday of over eighteen million people of African descent worldwide.

The holiday's extraordinary appeal has much to do with its symbolic representation of a time-honored African agricultural tradition, when the arrival of the first fruits of the year was a time to both celebrate and give spiritual praise for an abundant harvest. As such, Kwanzaa marks the continuity, unity and hope of people of African descent, whose ancestors endured a forced migration from Africa to New World societies.

Founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana (Ron) Karenga, an Africana studies scholar, activist, Kwanzaa uniquely synthesizes varied African traditions of language, ritual and agricultural production and contemporary African American traditions of familial and communal value systems. The one-week celebration, which begins on the twenty-sixth of December and culminates on New Year's Day, places an emphasis on such cultural tenets as spirituality, family, community and children.

The ritualistic aspects of the holiday are centered around *Nguzo Saba*, the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

1. **Umoja (Unity)** – to coalesce the family, community and race around issues of solidarity
2. **Kujichagulia (Self-determination)** – to define, create, name and speak for our selves
3. **Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)** – to establish, nurture and maintain our communities
4. **Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)** to establish and maintain collective economic ventures and use those profits in refurbishing Black communities
5. **Nia (Purpose)** – to collectively pursue individual and community growth and return our people to their former ancestral greatness
6. **Kuumba (Creativity)** – to create, sustain and beautify our surroundings
7. **Imani (Faith)** – to believe in our people and the righteousness and victory of our freedom struggle



Extended families gather together to celebrate Kwanzaa.

During the holiday, many Kwanzaa observers feature the African flag, whose colors symbolize the struggle against oppression (red), Black people (black) and our eternal quest for liberation (green). In our homes, we arrange a symbolic display of *mazao* (fruits and vegetables reflective of a collective harvest); *vibunzi* (corn, representing the children of the family); and *mkeka* (a straw placemat, symbolizing tradition).

Each day, one family member lights one of the seven candles (*mishumaa saba*) in the candleholder (*kinara*) and discusses the importance of the daily principle. On each day of the holiday, children take a special delight in receiving small gifts (*zawadi*) of educational or historical significance.

On the thirty first of December, the *Kwanzaa Karamu*, a celebratory feast featuring cuisine from various areas of the African diaspora, is held. Oftentimes, the *Karamu* includes music, dance, readings and remembering (*kukumbuka*) ancestors. The *Karamu* is frequently initiated with a libation statement (*tamsbi la tambiko*), and family and friends, who have gathered together, pass around the unity cup (*kikombe cha umoja*) and invoke the names of the ancestors (*kutoa majina*).

For all who observe Kwanzaa, these ceremonial rites connect us to the past and help shape our historical present.

Dr. Gary C. Tate is acting chair of the Africana Studies Department at Rutgers, the State University in New Brunswick.

NJPAC WORLD FESTIVAL

PORTUGUESE WORDS AND WAYS RUMOS E SONS PORTUGUESES

by Donzelina Augusta Barroso

The Portuguese-speaking world, as far-reaching today as were the voyages of exploration undertaken by Portugal five hundred years ago, is one of great dimension and variety. From the shores of Japan to the far reaches of the Amazon, the Portuguese put foot to soil, making their way into territories unknown to Europe



Gulbenkian Orchestra.

Why Portugal? Scholars have pondered the motivations of this small and relatively isolated outpost of Europe. History tells us that the voyages were intended to make Portugal a leading European power. Indeed, the initial explorations of the 1400s down the West African coast that led to voyages around the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, to the ultimate destination – India – in 1498, to the Far East and to Brazil in 1500, paved the way for an expansive overseas empire. But such journeys surely had more than the promise of power and gold behind them. With these travels, the stage was set for the creation of legacies that persist, to this day, in those areas to which the Portuguese traveled with fierce determination. And each point of arrival became a point of exchange

This exchange of language, religion, ritual and even genes has diffused across five centuries, evident in the traces of the Portuguese language found in regions of the Indian Ocean and Japan, in the architecture of colonial Brazil and in the military fortifications that dot Africa and the Persian Gulf, to name only a few legacies. Portuguese celebrations, music, dance, culinary traditions and religion also have influenced and been influenced by other cultures throughout the world. The Portuguese influence extends beyond Portuguese nationals to include those people and countries where the Portuguese language and cultural traditions have endured. This includes

four to five million immigrants in such places as Venezuela, Canada, the United States, Europe and South Africa, and other regions that have contributed to the Portuguese diaspora.

The Portuguese communities of the Ironbound section of Newark and neighboring towns have been a revitalizing force in New Jersey, prompting the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) to feature the art and culture of the Portuguese-speaking peoples of the world for its first *World Festival*. In fact, Portuguese immigrants have contributed to the history of the United States from



"Portugal Day" in the Ironbound section of Newark.

the first settlers, Portuguese Jews, who arrived in Dutch colonies of the East Coast in the late 1600s, to Azorean fishermen, who worked in the great whaling industries of New England in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to laborers and entrepreneurs of this century, who have settled in communities such as Newark

There is another reason that makes the extended culture of Portugal a fitting choice for the *NJPAC World Festival*. As we near the end of the millennium, we will witness the end of a five hundred-year cycle of exploration, entrepreneurship and colonialism. The last of the far enclaves, Macao, is still in Portuguese hands, but will be turned over to China in 1999. That year will mark the beginning of a new legacy. After 1999, Portugal will once more be a small nation, in the southwestern corner of Europe, with no overseas possessions, just as it was at the beginning of the cycle in the fifteenth century. It will create a new national identity and a new imagination for itself.

Broad in scope, NJPAC's first *World Festival* focuses on regions including Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Portugal and the Ironbound section of Newark itself whose cultures have seldom been explored in major performing arts venues. Brazil, for example, does reside in the collective imagination of the American public through movies and song, but how much do we really know about this nation? How much do we know of the individual countries of Africa, not just of the mythical, monolithic Africa of safari and travel?

The *World Festival* celebrates the roots and origins, paths and influences of Portuguese culture introducing children and adults alike to a new culture they might not have known before while highlighting the fundamental similarities shared by all people. The program includes traditional and modern dance; classical, modern and folk music; storytelling told



Batoto Yetu dancers in costume.

through dance and music; and two special photographic exhibitions, among other activities. Performers will share the variety of expression of the Portuguese speaking world, as well as the interconnectedness of the diaspora's many regions.

Batoto Yetu, a dance troupe of children, will bring the vitality of African traditions to NJPAC's stage. Led by Julio Leitão, an Angolan choreographer and visionary "social healer," Batoto Yetu celebrates traditions such as the passing down of culture to children in Africa, which is literally done through dance and songs about rites of passage. Traditional costumes and adornments reflect a heritage that is not always apparent to American audiences.

The people of Angola, a former colony of Portugal until 1975, are mainly of Bantu origin, an ethnic/language group with strong cultural traditions. It is estimated that almost forty percent of all captured Africans who reached the Americas were from this region. Many were destined for Brazil, to work the large sugar plantations and to mine precious gems and minerals. Others landed in the Caribbean and Cuba. Thanks to the enduring traditions maintained by the Bantu, the Americas now enjoy the sounds of music such as samba and Afro-Cuban rhythms, and the Afro-derived religions of Brazil, Haiti and Cuba.

From the state of Bahia in Brazil, a vibrant and multifaceted dance troupe, the Balé Folclórico da Bahia, will demonstrate the extent to which those African rhythms and traditions thrived in the Americas. Bahia has a large Afro-Brazilian population, and there the religions, foods and culture of Africa mixed with those of the indigenous peoples of Brazil and of those of Europe, creating life-affirming traditions now integrated into the Brazilian mainstream.



Balé Folclórico da Bahia.

The repertoire addresses the transport of captives from Africa to Brazil, the pantheon of deities of the Afro Brazilian religions, and *capoeira*, a form of self-defense practiced by the enslaved Africans. In performing pieces related to their often painful past, the Balé Folclórico da Bahia proudly reclaims Brazil's African heritage, and in so doing preserves an important component of the country's cultural and historical legacies.

Cape Verde, a tiny archipelago off the West African coast, is home to some of the most beloved music on the world music scene today. Its bittersweet musical expressions hark back to traditions of Portugal that mixed with those of Africa. Lyrics often reflect the harshness of the Cape Verdean landscape and the people's of their country. Cesaria Evora, the exemplary songstress of these islands, will bring her *morna*, a melancholic traditional song, to our shores, sharing with her audience the sadness as well as the joys of life.

Cape Verde boasts another music, based in the present and the future, that attempts to forge a national identity for this nation that gained independence only twenty two years ago. Largely a

Creole population of mixed African and European heritage, the people of Cape Verde are creating their own national legacy. The ten person music ensemble Simentera instructs through music and dance, addressing current social realities as well as history. Cape Verde's history and racial makeup place it at a cultural crossroads: One scholar notes that while the amalgam of Portuguese-African traditions makes Cape Verde the western extension of Africa, it can also represent the eastern extension of the Caribbean, or even the southern extension of Europe.¹

Mozambique, where Portuguese, the official national language, is spoken by only half of the population, represents the other, eastern side of Africa which faces the Indian Ocean. Performance traditions today fill a communication void in this nation in which more than



Cesaria Evora.

¹This provocative definition of Cape Verde appears in Lobban, Richard A. "A Synthesis of Capeverdean Culture and History," *Cimboa: A Journal of Letters, Arts, and Studies*, No. 1 (Summer 1996). Boston: Consulate General of Cape Verde.



*Nossa Senhora com o Menino, from
"The Crowning Glory: Images of the
Virgin in the Arts of Portugal," at
The Newark Museum.*

charged emotional terrain, 'Lingua Franca' forces the viewer to examine this world as it exists in its present reality, not in the historical imagination

"In the Wake of the Portuguese Navigators" by Michael Teague features dreamy photographs that follow the path of the Portuguese navigators in their journeys to Asia, Africa and South America during the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century voyages of exploration

The Newark Museum will present a major exhibition tracing the enduring image of the Virgin Mary in Portuguese art over the course of six centuries. Among the seventy-five works on view in the "Crowning Glory: Images of the Virgin in the Arts of Portugal" will be stone and polychrome wood sculptures, devotional altar pieces, paintings, jewelry, textiles and striking tile compositions. The works on display are predominantly from Portugal but also include pieces from countries of the Portuguese diaspora in Africa, Asia and North and South America. They represent traditional Portuguese interpretations of the theme of the Virgin, contrasting images such as the *Virgin and Child* by a Tschokwe artist from Angola and a majestic, jewel-encrusted silver image of *Our Lady of the Rosary* from India

Music, dance and theater, religious images and traditions bring to the fore both the similarities and the differences of countries that have been influenced by Portuguese words and ways. With the symbolic end of the Portuguese empire in 1999, the web of countries and peoples will remain connected solely through the collective legacy of art and culture, which will serve the larger purpose of preserving the past, not just for its own sake but in order to forge new, independent identities

Donzelina Augusta Barroso is a Portuguese American born in New York City who maintains contact with her Portuguese roots through work and outside interests. She is program coordinator for the Canoes Center for the Study of the Portuguese Speaking World, Columbia University and editor of its journal. Currently she is working on a volume about Lisbon. Having inherited the itinerant spirit of her Lusitanian ancestors, she enjoys travel and adventure

FESTIVAL OF YOUNG ARTISTS

YOUNG ARTISTS HIT THE HIGH NOTES

by Missy Sullivan

When he was young, the 17-year-old Lawrence Williams said he wanted that job there in New York City. He could be working for others and traveling, under the pretense of his school, keeping his secret on airtight paper as a good student would. Instead, the only path to his dream can be found in getting out a week or so from his school each day, to attend school of his own in New York City.

These *Escherichia coli* over time to short bursts of repeated stands released – creating time-splating beds and warming in all kinds of new biotopes.

Those performing an interesting look at how youth miss the point. For example, and the words of writers young diverse musicians and dancers who will be showcased in the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's Festival of Young Artists, where and where are they. Looking forward — and performing has proved as fundamental as it ever has been in the past. These are immensely creative and motivated young people who have found their way beyond the point and looking for the joy of self-expression. www.njpac.org

The following pages profile four extraordinary young people, who will appear at NYFW with the National Youth Career Development Program, the National Leadership and Career Development Center. NYDC is pleased to provide performance opportunities for these people, and the opportunity for audience participation in the final - scheduled NYFW event, as well as to ensure young people's ethical and academic conduct and to honor their all-important financial, academic, professional, and personal success.

Joel Tranquilla: In the Perfect Place

He gets home to Canada only four times a year, but that's okay with twelve-year-old Joel Tranquilla. He's having too much fun thrilling audiences as part of this country's pre-eminent boys' chorus. Since arriving at The American Boychoir School in Princeton in 1996, he and his choir mates have sung with The New York Philharmonic at New York's Avery Fisher Hall, appeared on the *Today* show, performed at the White House and toured the South. "This is the best thing I've ever done," bubbles Joel. "I don't feel like I'm missing out on other activities. The music experience here is so cool."



Joel Tranquilla (center) hits the high notes.

That is high praise coming from a young man whose life has been dominated by music. Raised in Fredericton, in Canada's New Brunswick province, due east of Maine, Joel announced to his mother, at the tender age of three, that if she didn't give him piano lessons he was going to have to teach himself. It's an instrument - in addition to his voice - that he continues to pursue seriously.

At The American Boychoir School, North America's only nonsectarian boarding choir school, Joel has joined eighty other boys from far and wide, who are just like him: talented, motivated and uncommonly poised. All of them, says Headmaster Thomas Thompson, were stars of their hometown choirs...and getting them to work together as a team is one of the school's main challenges. "Performing as a chorister has definitely taught me to depend on other people," says Joel, who is undaunted by the rigors of three hours of daily rehearsal and professional-level touring. "When we come together, we know we all want to get that sound that everyone loves."

The American Boychoir has delighted audiences across America and overseas with its jubilant singing and polished interpretations. Its schedule is studded with major symphony-orchestra appearances, and its many CDs sell well.

Whether singing selections from its classical repertoire or performing a Serbian gypsy piece, a Gilbert & Sullivan medley, a Scottish folk tune or a trio of African folk songs, the Boychoir pours concentrated joy into its finely honed collective voice. According to the school's tour director, after only a year, "Joel looks as if he's been doing this forever. This is the perfect place for him."

Laumonte Williams: In Flight

According to the dance teachers at the Ballet Tech school, fourteen year-old Laumonte Williams is blessed with a dancer's gifts. He's physical. He's agile. He's musical. And he's dramatic. It's even more evident, they say, now that he's performing. One need only watch him electrify the stage in Eliot Feld's raucous ballet "Meshugana Dance" (meaning "crazy" in Yiddish) to see what they mean. Laumonte says dancing in "Meshugana Dance" has been the high point of his budding dance career – it's high energy, he declares, and it satisfies his prodigious need to jump.

Ballet Tech was designed for the jumpers of the world. In search of children with a gift for dance, the school auditions 35,000 third and fourth graders annually in 450 New York City public schools, "discovering" nearly 1,000 young dancers who attend free dance classes.

Spotted during a search six years ago in his Queens elementary school, Laumonte later became one of twenty plus sixth graders chosen to matriculate full time at Ballet Tech, which offers intensive classical dance training and academic classes for sixth through twelfth graders.

Even with all of his natural ability, it has not been easy. Early on, Laumonte had to struggle with what he called his "attitude" problems. "It was something I had to move past in order to succeed. You won't get anywhere with the teachers on your bad side. I had to realize what I was missing out on and see what others were accomplishing that I wasn't." These days, as a member of Kids Dance, the performing troupe of Ballet Tech, he's accomplishing a great deal, and enjoying the applause of teachers and audiences alike. Whether it's dancing to music of the Italian Renaissance, a Klezmer ditty or an Irish jig, Laumonte Williams gets plenty of opportunities to soar.



Laumonte Williams (center) in class with members of Kids Dance.

For Kids by Kids

Nothing excites youngsters more than seeing other kids onstage. NJPAC's Festival of Young Artists draws some of the region's best young performers.

A tradition nearly seventy years old, New Jersey's **All-State Orchestra and Chorus** annually features the most promising young musicians from schools throughout the Garden State, in a special concert under the direction of selected professional conductors prominent in the music world.

Children's Theater Workshop/Peppermint Players

is an institution that puts children and teenagers first. Founded nearly twenty years ago with the idea of stimulating creative imaginations, encouraging artistic growth and reinforcing positive behavior in the community, this organization engages young people in the exciting process of creating and presenting original plays.

Middle school students from all over the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean train to meld their voices into the extraordinary **American Boychoir**, which has performed and recorded extensively throughout its sixty year history with the world's most renowned orchestras.

Newark has a rich history of presenting Latino entertainers, from international megastars to electrifying newcomers. Drawing on this vibrant tradition, NJPAC presents the **Hispanic Youth Showcase** featuring thirty six gifted, young dancers, instrumentalists and vocalists drawn from New Jersey's Hispanic communities. The showcase represents the culmination of a unique statewide talent search, where young artists compete for scholarships and an opportunity to appear in a television broadcast on New Jersey Network.

Sergio Salvatore's career can be described as *turbo charged*. This boy wonder of the jazz piano started playing at age four. At eleven, he recorded his debut CD, which featured seven of his own original compositions that blend jazz and classical styles. Now, at the ripe old age of sixteen, he is a veteran international performer and recording artist with three CDs to his credit. NJPAC will present Sergio and the prodigiously talented trumpeter **James Gibbs** in concert, backed by members of the Jazz Institute of New Brunswick Youth Ensemble.

Youth Theatre of New Jersey

nurtures the creative ideas, spirit and talent of young people. The company presents professionally trained young artists in original plays and musicals that reflect their hopes, dreams and challenges.

The best and brightest young musicians from New Jersey's youth orchestras will come together at NJPAC's **Youth Orchestra Festival**, held in cooperation with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. The Youth Orchestra Festival Concert will showcase these impressive musicians both in orchestral and ensemble settings.

Ballet Tech Kids Dance

has electrified family audiences at the Joyce Theater in New York City and elsewhere with its talent and playful exuberance. These young dancers, who have studied at the affiliate school Ballet Tech, perform ballets with a contemporary slant that are choreographed specifically for them by Ballet Tech founder Eliot Feld and other major choreographers.

Members of the **Jazz Institute of New Brunswick Youth Ensemble** get their training in performance skills, harmony, improvisation, jazz history and more, and show their mettle in swinging concerts that display their facility in a variety of jazz styles.

For Kids by Kids *(continued)*

The **New Jersey Children's Choir**

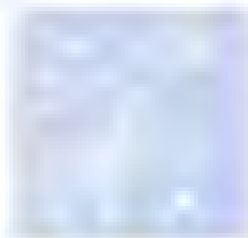
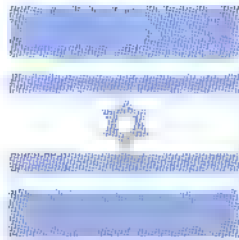
(NJCC) celebrates diversity both in its membership and its repertoire. Children from eight to sixteen, hailing from twenty different communities statewide, sing spirituals and folk songs from around the globe including Finland, Greece, Israel, Ireland, Russia, the Dominican Republic and South Africa. To keep things fresh, the NJCC annually commissions and premieres a new choral work by a contemporary composer/arranger.

All God's Children (AGC) is

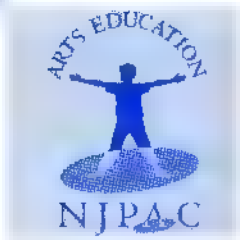
a multicultural children's choir, over one hundred voices strong, ranging in age from five to seventeen. Based in central New Jersey, AGC sings a repertoire of gospel, jazz and inspirational music meant to spread the message of tolerance, understanding and love.

For over a dozen years, Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey has held playwriting residencies for student scribes from around the Garden State and has invited these young artists to submit their scripts to the **New Jersey Young Playwrights Festival**. NJPAC will host readings of the winning plays featuring professional actors

Dubbed "Newark's Musical Ambassadors," the world renowned **The Newark Boys Chorus** serves as a symbol of the city's renaissance. The Newark Boys Chorus School is their training ground, offering inner-city middle school students, from fifth to eighth grade, the opportunity to reach their academic, musical and personal potential.

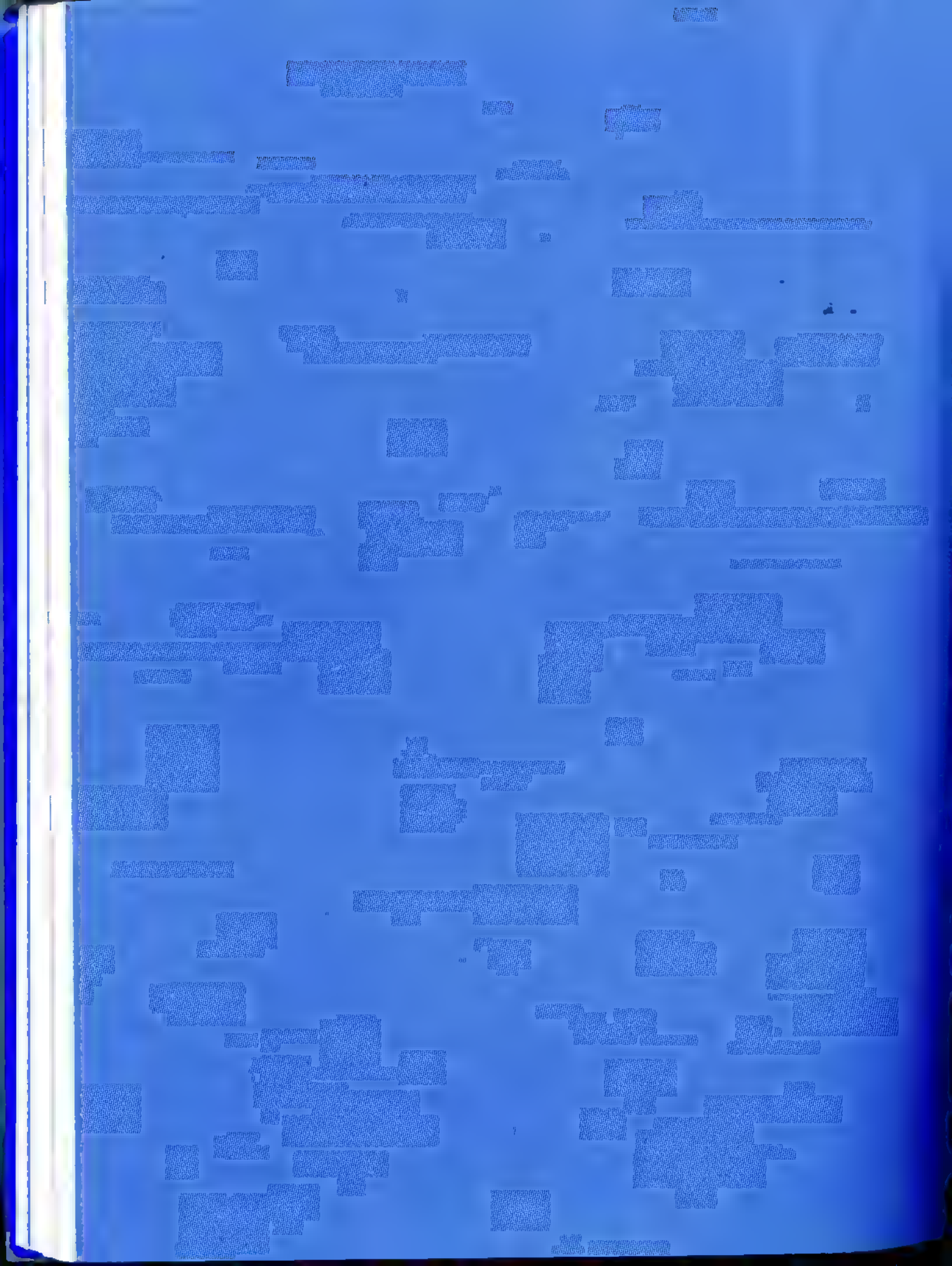


Commemorative Celebrations



New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

PASSPORT TO CULTURE



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.: CIVIL RIGHTS AND BLACK RELIGIOUS MUSIC

Reverend William D. Watley, Ph.D.



As America's major twentieth-century prophet of social justice, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. drew upon his African American religious heritage in many ways. He built upon the themes that he heard promulgated in the Black pulpit and that he saw practiced in the ministry and witness of the Black church, particularly his father's pulpit in Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church. He incorporated the motifs of traditional Black preaching into the evangelical liberalism of his later years. He not only appropriated the content but the style of the traditional African American male preacher, with its rich resonant tones, alliteration and cultural idioms.

Whether he was preaching in a Black church, proclaiming in a white church, speaking on a college campus or receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway, King was first and foremost an African American preacher. Moreover, with every stand he took, King embodied the moral leadership posture of African American religious leadership. In other words, King based the rationale for his actions and beliefs on moral principles rather than on political or legal arguments.

King embraced the liberation agenda and understood racism as a theological issue. Racism was not simply a sociological concern but sin, heresy and blasphemy. This perspective, the cornerstone of African American existentialism, inspired in King religious and philosophical reflection that was his foundational hermeneutic. The framework for his biblical exegesis was the Black churchview of the Hebrew prophets as God's anointed, appointed, politically aware, culturally grounded, socially conscious and economically astute spokespersons to the nations, and the affirmation of Jesus Christ not only as Lord and Savior but as the Liberator of the oppressed. The richness, dynamism and vibrancy of traditional African American worship provided the fire for the civil rights movement which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. helped to develop and lead.

One cannot think about the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s without invoking images of the massive rallies and demonstrations in Montgomery, Birmingham and Selma, Alabama, Albany, Georgia; Washington, D.C.; Chicago, Illinois, and scores of other communities that brought great numbers of people together, like never before or since, to dramatize the plight of America's Black citizenry.

One cannot think of these gatherings without reflecting upon the rich rhetoric, oratory, elocution and preaching that characterized King's speeches. These rallies not only expressed ire but engendered hope in Black people and others that America "would live out the true meaning of its creed."



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the "March on Washington" Civil Rights demonstration, August 28, 1963.

And one cannot think of this period without reflecting upon the music and artistry of the Movement. Much of the Civil Rights music and many of the Freedom songs were traditional, African American church music - hymns, spirituals and gospels. This genre of music was revised and the rhythms, updated, to minister and give meaning in another venue.

The music of the Movement of the 1960s, like Black church music today, was not sung or performed for entertainment purposes, nor was it intended to serve as "filler" during a pre-rally warmup or a demonstration. This music translated the spiritual message of the songs into concrete social action to inspire and motivate the masses not only to survive but to be triumphant in racist America.

The music of the Movement was originally and essentially worship and praise music that evolved from the religious "weltanschauung" of an oppressed people. African American people creatively used a faith tradition - originally taught to them to make them better slaves - to fight for their personhood and their freedom as well as for the future of their children and generations unborn.

The genesis of the music of the Movement was found in the cotton fields, the rice and tobacco plantations of the rural south and in the urban ghettos of the north. Indigenous Black religious bards sang of their hopes, dreams and aspirations to God, whom they believed would 'do right' and who would "make a way out of no way, somehow." The songs of the Movement were born in praise houses and storefronts as well as in mainline Black churches, where individual soloists, congregations and choirs sang away their sorrows and celebrated their salvation.

If the music of the Civil Rights era inspired the audiences who heard them, the reason was simple. Not only was it good music, it was not new music. This music had a long and noble tradition of fueling the spirits of a people who were incurably religious and who kept in view both the city of freedom in this life and a city called heaven in the world to come. This music was born in the context of struggle, nurtured in the fires of trouble and disappointment, and shaped upon the anvil of a tenacious and determined faith in self, in the future and in God. Like the African drumbeat, the melodies of this music had long reverberated in the souls of the people, whose religious tradition was a special amalgam of culture and Christ, faith and fire.

Part of the genius and greatness of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was his unashamed affirmation and use of the artistic and cultural religious expressions and gifts of his people, when such practice was not in vogue. If gospel and other Black church music are performed today in concert halls and other venues, it is because, in part, King and the early framers of the Civil Rights Movement boldly lifted this music and applied it to the national and international movement for civil and human rights for the oppressed, particularly Black Americans. In this and in so many other ways, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., though dead, 'yet speaketh'.

William D. Watley, Ph.D. is senior pastor of the three-thousand member St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Newark, NJ. He has worked extensively with ecumenical associations nationwide and has served on the governing board of the National Council of Churches of Christ since 1978. Dr. Watley has taught at Princeton, New York and New Brunswick Theological Seminaries and has written ten books and several articles. He holds a Master and Doctor of Philosophy from Columbia University and a Master of Divinity from the Interdenominational Theological Center.

A JOURNEY TO IDENTITY AND LIBERATION

by Sonia Sanchez

I was born in Birmingham, Alabama, where many of the Black women were mothers and servants. The men were mostly workers. A few well trained men were teachers in Black schools or worked in companies, like my grandfather, who worked at the American Cast Iron Pipe Company; as pipes came out he tagged them with a number. My grandmother was a domestic Housewife. Mother Head Deaconess in the AME Zion Church. We lived in the shadow of segregation. Racism. In the shadow of Black folks at the mercy of everyone.

In the South of my grandmother, grandfather and father stood a legalized, institutionalized oppression that spoke to the imposed limitations of Black folk. Separate schools. Sitting at the back of the bus. Separate churches. Cemeteries. Restaurants. Divided eyes viewing ourselves and the world. And fear was a constant companion for Black folk, even if you were a privileged Black man like my father because he was a teacher. Musician. Nightclub owner.

One of my missions as a writer has been to eradicate the aura of the educated class, while cherishing the creative power of learning. One of my missions has been to celebrate aggressive, beautiful and non-beautiful people, red-black gums, corn-cob-smoking men and women who were never considered poetic. I give them life and form and privacy. Beauty and dignity.

In the North where my family moved to. The North of New York City. The North of Harlem. The North of a first-floor back apartment. The North of a bedroom with a window facing a back wall and a courtyard of garbage and smells and sounds of holy and unholy people's voices splintering in the night.

In the North of subtle racism and open disrespect, of a teacher walking into a classroom and stating to the boys: "I don't know why I'm gonna try to teach you anything, because you'll just end up in jail anyway" and some of the young men fulfilled her prediction and ended up in prison. And she turned and looked at the young girls and said: "I don't know why I'm gonna teach you either, you're just gonna end up with babies." And some of them did.

My struggle and the struggle of others for identity and liberation has influenced my imagination and the creativity of many writers. For in this supposed free North, I discovered schools in Black and Puerto Rican neighborhoods that taught science with no laboratories. I discovered tenements that had no regular garbage pickup. I discovered corner merchants who kept books on what you owed, purchased and dared your father or mother to speak up or disagree or you would be cut off of the loan line.

I discovered bars and liquor stores on our corners and storefront churches. Sounds of swinging jubilation and hope and despair breaking the sullen Harlem air.

I discovered a little girl in love with books and writing and no one cared and no one thought that writing was a possibility for someone Black and female. As my counselor stated at Hunter College, "You want to be a writer?" And she laughed and said there are no Black writers. "You must be realistic. We let you come to Hunter (you privileged one) so you can



Sonia Sanchez.

be a social worker, teacher, or nurse. A writer. That's not possible." And I accepted her analysis of life. And others' analyses of life, including my father's advice: "Get an education. It'll help you. Free you. Then get married and move to Long Island or Mount Vernon. Leave Harlem." This Harlem of Black faces asking for equality. Love Freedom. Life.

And then I heard the Southern Thunder. Saw the bravery of Black students in the South. Saw them sitting in, questioning others' authority over their lives

And then I heard new words: Boycott Freedom. We-shall overcome words. Freedom Rides. SNCC words. Martin Luther King words. And then I found New York's CORE. Picketed Closed Woolworth stores

And then I heard the Northern Morning Thunder: Malcolm. And his voice sent me out looking for myself. Into the Schomburgs of the world. And I found DuBois. Robeson. Delaney. Blake. Wheatley. Chestnutt. Douglass. Bethune. And I was no longer afraid of Malcolm, because he was part of the continuum. And I met Garvey. Hughes. Brown. (Sterling and William Wells) McKay. Barnett. Arthur P. Davis. Toomer. And Malcolm sent my eyes overseas to Ngugi. Achebe. Nyere. Nkrumah. CLR James. Guillen. Neruda

And I made another amazing discovery. When you go searching for your identity. When you write about yourself and your struggle, when you begin a journey of identity and liberation, you find yourself and others who have been vanished, too. Who have hidden their eyes from themselves

As I taught in a university setting I discovered Japanese Americans in concentration camps. Native Americans walking their long march. Chinese men and women secreted in the creases of America. building railroads, dying consumptive, working in the laundry rooms of America ironing white shirts with heavy irons asking my yellow-skinned almond-eye sister You Chinese, you Chinese, you Chinese.

I found Chicanos sitting under movie sombreros, always portrayed as fat and lazy and content. I found Puerto Ricans alienated from their homeland. Found them not learning Spanish, because their parents wanted them to be good Americans

I met gay men and lesbians coming out in the streets of America, taking over San Francisco politics until a strange illness curtailed their activism for a decade

So to be Black. To write Blackly in America leads you on a journey to discovery of self, where you find others hiding out also. And you extend your hand tentatively and say you must be the Brother. You must be the Sister they never told me about. *Hola. Neen how mah. Hotep. Salaam Alakum. Shalom. Hey. How you doing?*

Award-winning poet, scholar and activist, *Sonia Sanchez* is the author of thirteen books including *Homecoming*, *We a BaddDDD People*, *Love Poems*, *I've Been a Woman*, *New and Selected Poems*, *Sound Investment and Other Stories*, *Wounded in the House of A Friend*, and, most recently *Does Your House Have Lions?* (Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1997). In addition to being a contributing editor to *Black Scholar* and the *Journal of African Studies*, she has edited two anthologies. The first Presidential Fellow at Temple University and the recipient of many awards and honors, she is Laura Carnell Professor of English and Women's Studies at Temple University.

MUSIC OF HOPE: THE ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

by Alan Zelenetz, Ph.D.

It was 1971, and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra had been invited for the first time to take part in the prestigious music festivals of Europe. In Germany, after a stirring performance of Gustav Mahler's Symphony no. 1 under the baton of musical director Zubin Mehta, the Berlin concert hall audience broke into enthusiastic applause and hearty cries of "Encore!" Maestro Mehta turned swiftly from the crowd to his beloved musicians and spoke one word, "Hatikvah," to which the Orchestra responded with the melody of the national anthem of their homeland, *Hatikvah*, "The Hope" in Hebrew.

It was a moment rich in irony, for the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra had been founded thirty five years earlier as a refuge for Jewish musicians dispossessed by the former Nazi state in whose capital city they now triumphed as artists. It was a moment rich in victory, victory for the human spirit of hope and for the universal spirit of music, whose transcendent power now united these two people, Germans and Jews, however tragic and painful their past.

In 1936, the Polish-born, Jewish violinist Bronislaw Huberman persuaded, with a sense of urgency, some seventy-five Jewish musicians to leave their posts with major European orchestras and settle in Palestine. He envisioned, first, the rescue of artists persecuted by the Nazi regime, and second, the creation of an orchestra that would contribute to the character of the Jewish cultural renewal in the land and ultimately serve as the Jewish people's goodwill ambassador abroad.



The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, under the baton of Zubin Mehta.

On December 26, 1936, the Palestine Orchestra, as it was then called, gave its premiere concert in Tel Aviv, which was then still as much sand dune as it was city. Onstage sat an assemblage of immigrant musicians mostly from Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary and Holland, joined by some from the United States and a few who had already been living in Palestine. On the podium stood the most eminent conductor of the day, Arturo Toscanini, who had himself previously escaped the rise of fascism in his native Italy. "I am doing this for humanity," he said, having accepted the offer to direct the opening concert as a means of championing the spirit of freedom, which seemed to be losing ground to totalitarian regimes in Europe.

And so the premiere concert, which rang brightly with the music of Rossini, Mendelssohn, Schubert and Brahms, performed by musicians from all different nations, indeed celebrated freedom, tolerance, creativity and independence with all the attendant sense of birth and joy. Because of the presence of the world famous Toscanini at its head, the orchestra was thrust into the limelight, acquiring almost immediate international rank; perhaps more important, the underlying message of the commemorative occasion was not lost to the world. The music of the fledgling Palestine Orchestra, like all great art, proclaimed passionately the eternal truth that, come what may, the human spirit would prevail

And prevail it did. When fifty years ago, on May 14, 1948, David Ben-Gurion read Israel's Proclamation of Independence – in accord with the earlier United Nations Partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish states – the proudly renamed Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) played *Hatikvah* at the official ceremony, thus commemorating the launching of a new nation in the same land that was once the ancient birthplace of the Jewish people.

Since that day, the IPO has gone on to fulfill the hopes of Bronislaw Huberman. Because of its orchestra, the state of Israel has developed an enviable concert life. The IPO performs more than one hundred and fifty concerts a year across the nation, from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to Haifa, to rural districts, kibbutzim and military outposts. Its number of subscribers has grown from five thousand to well over thirty thousand

Historically committed to welcoming musicians from all over the world, the men and women of the orchestra have in the last few years seen their numbers swell with emigrés from the former Soviet Union. Zubin Mehta, the sixty year-young conductor, who continues to lead the orchestra as Musical Director for Life, is himself a native of India; although, for all his contributions to the country in terms of both music and morale, in times of peace and in times of war, he has been made an honorary citizen of Tel Aviv.

As its founder had intended, starting with an inaugural-year concert in Egypt only two weeks after its own Tel Aviv premiere in 1936, the Israel Philharmonic has not ceased to travel as the nation's ambassador to the world, highlighting the best qualities of the people and culture of Israel to international audiences from China to Denmark, Buenos Aires to Vatican City, and, of course, New Jersey as well.

As much as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra looks back proudly on its national tradition and its heroic past, and busies itself with its present international status, it has not neglected to keep alive the vision that first sustained it. Under its auspices today, the Young Philharmonic Orchestra discovers local talent and nurtures it, representing tomorrow's hope – to paraphrase Walt Whitman – of great artists to perform for alert, appreciative and responsive audiences of the future

Alan Zelenetz Ph.D., is a native New York educator and writer who holds graduate degrees in English and comparative literature from Columbia University. He has written on interdisciplinary curriculum development, modern music, Irish literature and the Talmud, and is the author of the *Marvel Graphic Novels The Raven Banner, Kull the Conqueror*, and *The Alien Legion*. He currently serves on several advisory committees for the Lincoln Center Institute for Aesthetic Education

PAUL ROBESON: AN AMERICAN HERO

by Barbara Pasternack

Paul Robeson once said, "My song is my weapon." Scholar, lawyer, renowned singer and star of stage and screen, Robeson had a voice that communicated to audiences the pain, suffering and hope of people everywhere. At a time of Jim Crowism, social inequity and prejudice, his voice transcended divisions of race, gender and class. He was honored more than any other Black man in the world by white society in Europe and America.

Martin Duberman, a Robeson biographer, suggests that once he had achieved fame, Robeson "might have avoided racial injustices of the time, but instead he challenged those injustices head on." He dedicated his life and his art to fighting for freedom and equal rights not only for his people but for all oppressed people. In 1937, Robeson said, "The artist must elect to fight for freedom or for slavery. I have made my choice. I had no alternative."

Theatreworks/USA thought it was time to examine the life of Paul Robeson, a man who asked how he could use his talents to help others. To tell this complex tale, Theatreworks/USA engaged the great actor, writer, director and social activist Ossie Davis to write an original play in commemoration of the birth centennial of this authentic American hero. Davis, who knew Robeson personally, tells the story in his play "Paul Robeson."



Robeson was born in 1898 in Princeton, New Jersey. Much of America was segregated then, and many Black children felt a deep sense of racial inferiority. However, Robeson's preacher-father, an ex slave, instilled in his son a sense of pride and self-worth as a Black man. Robeson earned the highest rank in his high school class, and won a statewide scholarship to attend Rutgers University, becoming one of two Black students enrolled that year. He excelled both in the classroom and on the football field. Robeson's father stressed that with these great intellectual and physical gifts came a responsibility to his people: fulfilling his potential and using his talents for the greater good.

While white America applauded and respected his achievements, Robeson still was not totally accepted. After graduating from Columbia Law School, Robeson was denied membership to the American Bar Association. Frustrated, he left law and embarked on an acting and singing career – but always with an eye to social responsibility. By the mid-1920s, Robeson had starred in Eugene O'Neill's plays, "The Emperor Jones" and "All God's Chillun."

Gaining further acclaim singing Negro spirituals, Robeson spent most of the years between the 1920s and the 1930s in England and Europe, where he found greater racial tolerance. He became more political, embracing African nationalism, labor unions and anti fascist causes. Robeson supported all people fighting tyranny, learned their songs and languages, and dedicated himself and his art to this fight.

In the end, it was Robeson's politics that would silence him as an artist. In 1939, when communism preached absolute equality, Robeson fell in love with the Soviet Union and its people. "In Russia," he said, "I felt for the first time a full human being – no color prejudice like in Mississippi and no color prejudice like in Washington."

Upon returning to America in 1939, and during World War II, at the height of his popularity, Robeson continued to speak and sing in support of Black rights and Soviet loyalty. Once the war ended, a Cold War hysteria began, and Robeson's outspokenness was viewed as dangerously subversive. He was attacked in the press for insinuating that Black Americans would not fight in a war against the Soviet Union. This resulted in hostility from not just white Americans but also from some Black Americans fearful of white retribution; they insisted that Robeson did not speak for them.



John Henry Davis, director of "Paul Robeson," actor and playwright Ossie Davis, and actor Jonathan Peck at an early reading of the play (from left to right).

Thus began Robeson's descent to nonperson status. Riots occurred at a Robeson concert in Peckskill, New York, bookings dried up and his recordings were removed from record shops. Ultimately, after an appearance in front of the House Un-American Activities Committee, Robeson's passport was revoked, a measure that denied him access to his international audience. The great voice was silenced.

Not until the 1970s did many acknowledge Robeson's contributions as a freedom fighter. Today, when young people ask "How can I

help?", it is important for them to learn about Paul Robeson. Idealistic, courageous, a hero to oppressed people all over the world, Robeson had everything, and was willing to sacrifice it all for his beliefs. His life, like that of Othello – a role he was the first Black actor to portray – was glorious *and* tragic, and well worth remembering.

As associate artistic director for Theatreworks/USA in New York for the past thirteen years, *Barbara Pasternack* has been involved in the development of more than forty new works. She has written children's plays as well as a Vietnam retrospective which appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*. Since its founding thirty-six years ago, Theatreworks/USA has included in its programming for young people dramatic portrayals of great Americans.

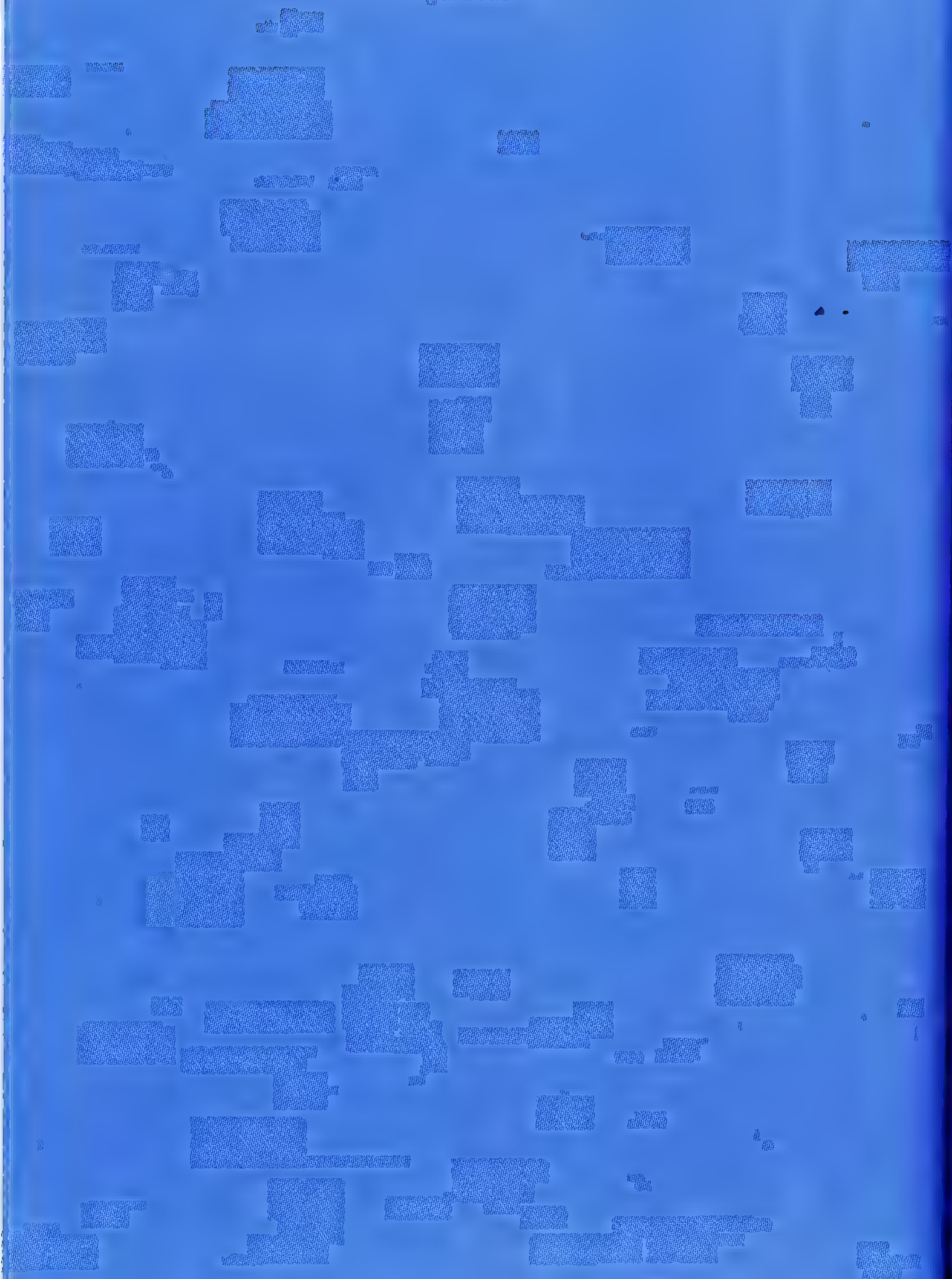


The Community Link



New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

PASSPORT TO CULTURE



THEN AND NOW

by Jane Remer

When I was in elementary school in the 1930s and '40s, I had a semester of domestic arts (sewing, at which I was clumsy, and cooking, at which I excelled), a semester of art from a very uninspired teacher (I was totally inept), and music for several years from a marvelous teacher, Ms. Marshall. Ms. Marshall directed a scaled-down version of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Uridice*, and a different Gilbert & Sullivan operetta every year for which we all tried out.

From time to time, artists would visit our school and sing spirituals at our assemblies. We also had intraclass singing competitions, and occasionally, talented students would act, sing or play for us. In high school, there was the glee club, period. When I went on to Oberlin College, I was an actress and president of the extracurricular Dramatic Association. While they were not part of the general curriculum (except for the Conservatory), the arts were intense on campus and in the community.

Over the years, I have continued acting, dancing, writing and making music; I became a theater, dance and opera buff; I taught movement until recently. I visit museums, galleries and go often to concerts and the movies.

From this accounting, my exposure to the arts in elementary and high school does not explain my immense love for and immersion in them throughout my life. For that we must look to what my father called "the hidden curriculum" of home and family background. There was always music playing in my childhood home; there was always dancing; there was always intense and passionate discussion of the latest plays, concerts, dance events, operas and films we had seen.

I had piano lessons and modern, ballet, jazz and other dancing lessons. I taught myself to play the guitar. I went to summer camps where the arts were emphasized and where I finally learned to sight-read music and developed a love for the wonders of choral and madrigal singing.

My own life, obviously, has been filled with the arts in and out of school. They were part of my background, my culture, my values. It never occurred to me to question their necessity or the transcendent joy that involvement in them produced. To me the arts were natural; they were an essential part of everything I did.

Oddly, when I graduated from college, I chose to go to law school, where I did not last very long, the pull of the arts and the lure of education were too strong. What was it that helped me decide on a career in the arts in education? The simple answer: federal legislation and my children's experience in the New York City public elementary schools.

Even in the so-called halcyon days of the '60s, the arts were not much in evidence in many of our city's elementary schools. I knew my own kids would ultimately have the benefit of the same hidden curriculum I did, but that was not good enough. Not only did I want them to have much more in their schools, but what about all the other kids who might not have access to such advantages?

That is when I started my work with a number of the City's better-known arts organizations, then later with the New York City school system, and finally, before I went freelance,

with the John D. Rockefeller 3rd Arts in Education Program. I was determined to see whether and how I could improve opportunities for my own children in their schools as they went through the system. Equally, if not more important, I wanted to learn how to help all children and youth, in all our schools, to enjoy meaningful arts experiences, just as I had. Here are some of the lessons I learned along the way

- You cannot, dare not, take the arts for granted – not in America, anyway. By and large, they are not part of the value system or the culture of every citizen. In fact, in recent days, the arts and artists have become suspect (again, as history teaches us) and even dangerous. You must always make a case for the arts and, once made, make it over and over again, vigilantly
- I do not think the arts, as disciplines in their own right, need any defense. I also think they contribute to general learning and belong in every kid's education, they belong to all adults, too. There are those who shy away from the "arts for arts' sake" notion because of the American need to justify spending money or time on anything only in terms of its usefulness, its specific cause and positive effect. This has led to a tension between two presumably polar 'camps' – those who prefer to remain "purists" and those who insist that to gain credibility and support, the arts must prove their worth according to their ability to improve learning, create better citizens, raise test scores, produce better workers, and reduce crime and vandalism. I think both camps have a point
- I believe that good, comprehensive arts programs for all children have three essential components: study in the arts disciplines; interdisciplinary or integrated teaching and learning in which the arts are functionally related to the curriculum; and partnerships with the community's arts and cultural resources to enhance curriculum and instruction. In an ideal world, every school would have arts specialists teaching all the kids every year in *at least* the four major arts disciplines: visual arts, music, dance and drama. Every teacher in the school would develop the capacity to integrate the arts into the daily curriculum, maintaining a healthy balance between the integrity of the art form, the artistic dimension and other academic content. And all of the community's arts and cultural resources would work in various arrangements, in and out of school, providing professional resources, collaborative instruction and assistance in the development of a curriculum that includes the aesthetic dimension, arts history and the knowledge of many world cultures

This nirvana is worth working for, but it may be a long time coming. The questions of value, old habits of schooling, competing social and economic priorities and other political factors are fierce obstacles that stand in our way. But I am committed to the path I have chosen, and fortunate to work with a number of others around the country, including the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, who share the credo: All the arts for all the children in all of our schools and communities

*Jane Remer is a widely recognized consultant in the arts and education fields and the author of *Changing Schools through the Arts: How to Build on the Power of an Idea* (McGraw-Hill, 1982; ACA Books, 1990) and *Beyond Enrichment: Building Effective Arts Partnerships with Schools and Your Community* (ACA Books, 1996). She currently serves as program director of the Capezio Ballet Makers Dance Foundation.*

NJPAC GROWS ARTS CENTERED CHILDREN

by Philip S. Thomas

In 1991, six years before the New Jersey Performing Arts Center embarked on its inaugural season, NJPAC designated arts education as a principal initiative, and within a year established an Arts Education Department. Energized by NJPAC's passionate commitment to engage children, families and educators in high quality performing arts experiences, the staff set a course. Their charge was to develop programs that would stimulate creative expression; impart skills, knowledge and discipline in the performing arts; celebrate the rich cultural diversity of the arts; excite the imagination; and enhance the joy of learning.

Before formalizing its arts education vision and making programmatic choices, the NJPAC Arts Education Department (AED) launched an eighteen-month planning process in 1993 that focused on three main areas – public discourse, research and early action projects – and culminated in *Arts Centered Children: The Ten Year Action Plan*. This plan has served as a blueprint for the implementation of a meaningful and comprehensive arts education initiative at NJPAC.

From the start of the planning process, the AED took an inclusive, team approach, and invited individuals representing a broad range of backgrounds and experiences to partake in public discourse and explore NJPAC's roles and opportunities in the provision of arts education services. It organized three resource teams, sponsored five conferences and held a series of focus groups to stimulate a valuable exchange of ideas.

The AED also engaged in extensive research. Staff collected and analyzed available information on the nature and types of arts education activities provided by local and statewide



Two hundred children "strut their stuff" in "Fat City."



Young dancers enjoy workshop at summer camp.

arts and community-based organizations. They identified opportunities for partnerships with New Jersey's arts, educational and social service communities. They also studied exemplary national arts education initiatives that could be adapted for replication at NJPAC.

Guided by this research and the collective wisdom drawn from community and national leaders in the arts, social services and education, the AED implemented two early action projects in 1994. The first of these projects, "Fat City" was a five week dance residency that involved two hundred children

in the Newark and Union school districts, who "strutted their stuff" in five professionally staged performances of "Fat City" for over 8,800 children and adults at Newark Symphony Hall.

The second early action project generated even broader participation. The NJPAC *Mural Magic* project, completed in May 1994, inspired over 2,000 children from 141 urban and suburban schools and community based organizations to create 185 murals that surrounded the Center's construction site until April 1997. Other early action projects have included the community-based Music Residency, the Dance Academy and the Summer Dance Experience.

The collaborative and joyful spirit that made these early action projects so successful has continued to drive NJPAC's arts education efforts. The ongoing expansion of partnerships with public, private and parochial schools, parents, and community-based organizations throughout the state, as well as with local and national artists and arts organizations, has enabled NJPAC to increase its arts education programming and expand its reach.

NJPAC's arts education programs now include the Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture* SchoolTime and FamilyTime Series; the Arts Academy, NJPAC Early Learning through the Arts; the

Summer Arts Camp; Youth Orchestra Festival; the Youth Performance Workshops; NJPAC WBGO Jazz for Teens; the Arts Basic to the Curriculum (ABC) Conference and Showcase, and an Internship Program. These performance, residency, training and professional development programs emanate from an unwavering belief in the power of the arts to provide an essential base of information that enables children to know the world in which they live and to serve as a creative medium through which children express their responses to the world.

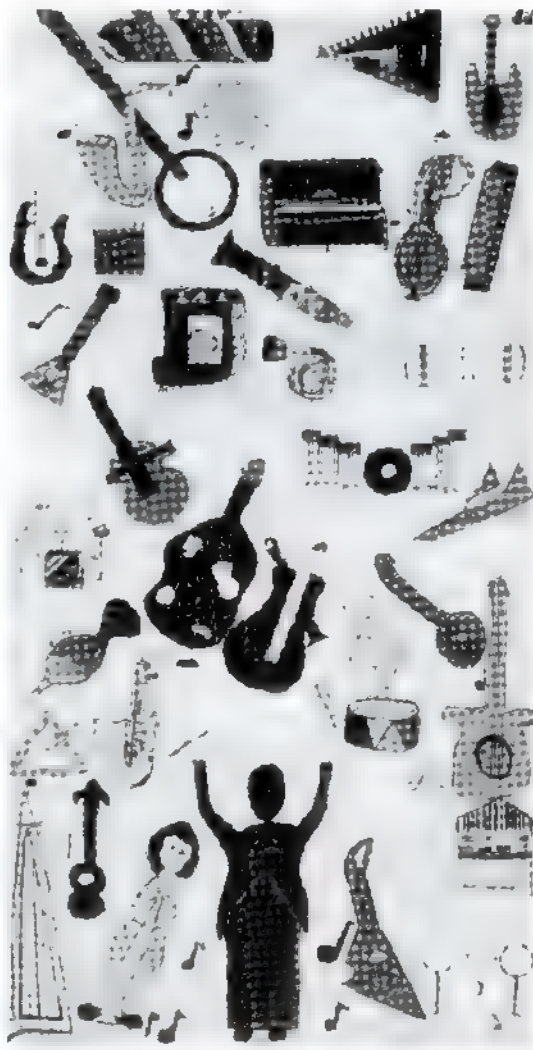


Making music and new friends.

Since 1994, the NJPAC Arts Education Department has touched the lives of more than 14,000 children, families and educators. With the opening of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in October 1997, the AED has entered a new era. Its on site anchor program, the Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture* Series, embodies and advances the theme "Arts Centered Children." In addition to school matinees and weekend performances by the world's foremost dancers, actors and musicians, *Passport to Culture* offers meet-the-artist sessions, backstage tours, professional and personal development workshops for educators and parents, and curriculum materials that serve to enhance and enrich the educational value of each performance.



Voices lifted in harmony.

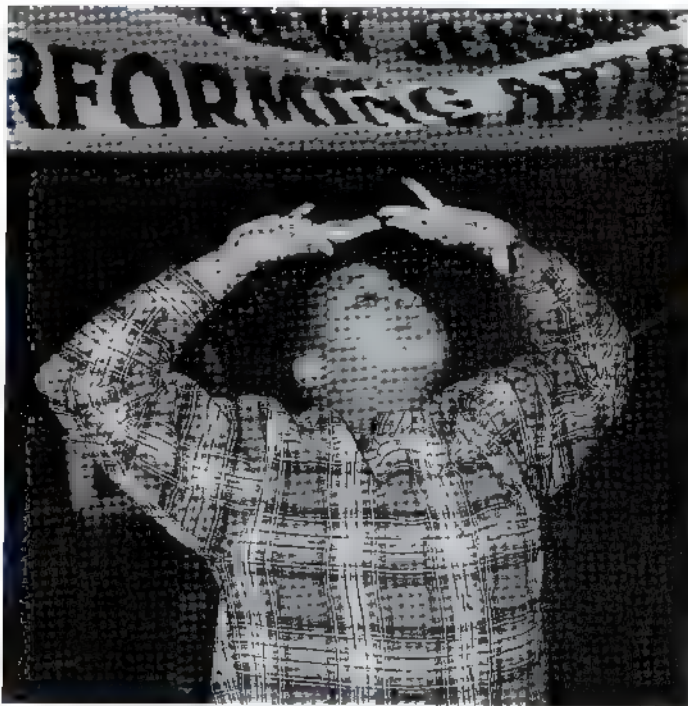


Murals created by students from Wilson Avenue School, Newark, (left) and from Visitation Academy, Paramus (right).

During its inaugural season, NJPAC's theaters will be filled with children and families on a regular basis. However, the AED will continue to offer its off-site programs, which serve as vital corollaries to the programs and performances presented at the Arts Center.

PERFORMANCE SERIES

The Bell Atlantic *Passport to Culture* SchoolTime and FamilyTime Series inaugurates NJPAC's annual performing arts series for children and families. Each year, NJPAC will con-



Focusing on a dramatic moment.

tinue to present artists of national and international renown as well as the most successful New Jersey performers in music, dance and theater, celebrating the multiplicity of ethnic and cultural traditions in New Jersey and the country

RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

Arts Academy

NJPAC's Arts Academy brings the wonder of dance and theater directly to elementary, middle and high school children through interactive, in-school workshops conducted by professional artists. In *Focus on Dance*, designed especially for third and fourth graders, professional artists guide students in the fundamentals of ballet, tap, modern and African dance. In *Focus on Theater*, offered to middle and high school students, young people explore play writing, improvisational theater, classical theater, theater for the deaf and musical theater

Included in these ten week residency programs are professional development opportunities for classroom teachers as well as for teaching artists, curriculum resource materials, parent workshops, professional dance or theater performances, student presentations and evaluation and assessment plans

Arts Academy classes have been led by teaching artists from the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, Galman's Dance Theatre, New Jersey Ballet, New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, New York Deaf Theatre, Ltd., and Playwrights Theatre of New Jersey, among others.

NJPAC Early Learning through the Arts – The New Jersey Wolf Trap Program

The faces of three-to-five-year-old children brighten when NJPAC artists visit their preschool or Head Start centers to teach them basic academic and life skills through music, puppetry, storytelling, dance and creative dramatics. The seven-week residency program captures the imaginations of these budding learners and provides guidance for teachers to enable the

learning process to continue after the residency is completed. The program includes daily classes for students, live performances for students and teachers, as well as planning sessions, professional development workshops and curriculum materials

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Summer Arts Camp

Third, fourth and fifth grade students stretch their imaginations and develop their talents and skills in dance, theater and music at NJPAC's Summer Arts Camp. Started in 1996 and held at Essex County College in Newark, the four-week day camp allows youngsters to immerse themselves in the arts with complete concentration and purpose. Participants enjoy close relationships with professional artists and trained counselors, who lead the classes, recreational activities and field trips. Camp ends with "Camp Crescendo," a final presentation showcasing the combined creative talents that were honed during the four-week period.

Youth Orchestra Festival

Master classes, clinics, world-class performances and the chance to audition for a festival orchestra are all part of NJPAC's Youth Orchestra Festival. The three-day festival, presented in cooperation with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, gives student musicians from New Jersey's youth orchestras an opportunity to interact with guest conductors, prominent musicians and their peers

Youth Performance Workshop

NJPAC's Youth Performance Workshop gives talented middle and high school students throughout New Jersey a chance to receive specialized training in dance, theater and music. The ten-week, after-school program features a series of classes and workshops taught by consummate theater, dance and music professionals, who help the young performers utilize their creative talents and develop and present workshop productions for family, friends and the general public



Wolf Trap Institute master artist Leonore Blank Kelner.

NJPAC/WBGO Jazz for Teens

Teenagers encounter the spontaneity and excitement of jazz in this program designed to tap into their natural affinity for this essentially American art form. Aspiring musicians get a close look at the history, techniques and varied expressions of jazz through performances, workshops and clinics given by professional jazz artists.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Arts Basic to the Curriculum (ABC) Conference and Showcase

Artists, educators, parents and social service workers can explore national and local trends in arts education at NJPAC's annual Arts Education Conference and Showcase. The two-day

program features lively and spirited interactive workshops, guest speakers and performances highlighting the season's artists plus new curriculum materials that are essential to enhancing the NJPAC experience for students in the classroom.

Internship Program

Promising undergraduate and graduate students gain valuable experience in arts education and arts administration through NJPAC's Internship Program.

The interns work closely with



Teachers and parents treat themselves to a dance workshop.

the Arts Education Department in a variety of administrative functions in order to gain practical experience in coordinating arts education programs for children, families and educators in New Jersey.

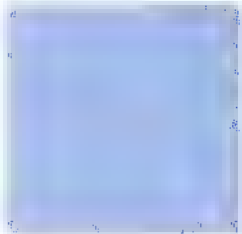
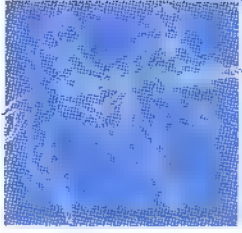
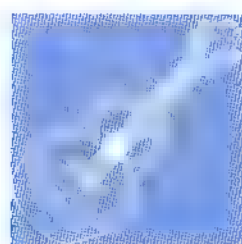
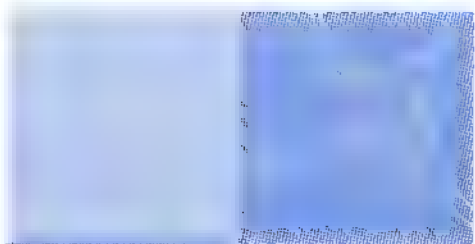
CURRICULUM MATERIALS

Providing innovative curriculum materials is an integral part of every NJPAC Arts Education Department program. These curriculum materials, based on the New Jersey Department of Education's Core Curriculum Content Standards, enhance and enrich the educational value of residencies and performances.

Philip S. Thomas, vice president for arts education at NJPAC, has played an active role in New Jersey's arts community for more than twenty years. He has held positions with the Carter G. Woodson Foundation, the Newark Board of Education, Newark Symphony Hall, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the Greater Paterson Arts Council and Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center.



Principal Affiliates



New Jersey PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

PASSPORT TO CULTURE

IN THE SPIRIT OF INQUIRY

by Stephanie S. Hughley

K

nown to passersby as a majestic glass palace newly sprouted on Newark's riverfront, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center is already drawing thousands of visitors to its splendid theaters, where the most distinguished performing artists in the world are presented in hospitable and elegant surroundings.

Apart from its attraction as a state-of-the-art performance venue, NJPAC is showing its mettle as a catalyst for urban revitalization through culture and the arts. From its inception, the founders of NJPAC were committed to serving the community that gave life to the Center. This fact is demonstrated in the multiplicity of programs sponsored by NJPAC's Arts Education Department – a department that was active and fully functional for four years before the Center's completion.

Among its newest initiatives is the Principal Affiliate Program. Going beyond its role as presenter, NJPAC has thrown its resources behind this initiative in building long term partnerships with individual artists and arts and cultural organizations. These special, multiyear relationships will create opportunities for extended collaborations such as new commissions, master classes, open rehearsals, lecture series and the development of community-wide projects. The chosen artists and organizations, designated as Principal Affiliates, will benefit from this opportunity for professional growth and development within the community, which is made possible through this partnership with NJPAC.

The public stands to gain essential knowledge and understanding from long term access to the work of Principal Affiliates. Attending an open rehearsal, a master class or a lecture demonstration allows audience members to participate in a dialogue with the performer, stimulating inquiry and involvement and deepening their understanding of the creative process.

We at NJPAC regard artists as keepers of the culture: they provoke and challenge us, showing us the common ground of humanity. By bringing together Principal Affiliate artists and audiences in a variety of multilayered experiences, we hope to enhance communication and deepen mutual understanding. Principal Affiliates are made possible by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Stephanie S. Hughley joined NJPAC as vice president, programming, in 1995. Prior to this position, she was theater and dance producer for the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games Cultural Olympiad, for which she helped create multiyear arts, culture and entertainment events leading up to the 1996 Olympic Arts Festival. She also served as the founding artistic director of the National Black Arts Festival in Atlanta, and general manager of the Negro Ensemble Company in New York City.

Resident Company

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

Resident Principal Affiliates

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Alvin Ailey American Dance Center

NJPAC Principal Affiliates

Arts Education Programming

Nai Ni Chen

Carolyn Dorfman

George Street Playhouse

Deborah Mitchell

Nicholas Rodriguez

WBGO-JAZZ 88

Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts

NJPAC Principal Affiliates

General Programming

American Ballet Theatre

American Repertory Ballet

Crossroads Theatre

Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra

McCarter Theatre

New Jersey Chamber Music Society

New York Shakespeare Festival
651, An Arts Center

PRINCIPAL AFFILIATES: IN THEIR OWN VOICES

Nai-Ni Chen

Artistic Director, Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company

Since I was a child, the sight of clouds floating in the sky often touched me. They made such wondrous shapes as they were blown by the wind. And when I heard the powerful sound of the pine forest in the wind, it fascinated me. Off the coast of Keelung, a city in Taiwan where I grew up, I also remember watching schools of tropical fish swimming in the blue water, forming diverse patterns and colors, which made me want to join their joyful dance right there. As I grew older, I loved the mountains. Their magnificent strength embodies the power of the earth and all the living things that inhabit it.

Looking back, I realize what a great impact my surroundings have had on me as an artist. And now, when I walk on the streets of America, I feel the enormous freedom and vitality of the people of this land; that is what has nourished me for the past fifteen years.

In life, every day is a fascinating journey of discovery. Each discovery we make has a significant influence on our future. My dance reflects what I am and how I feel about the world. I believe dance is a way to express the passion for life in all of us. An expression beyond words, it can cross cultural boundaries and be shared by all people.

As a NJPAC Principal Affiliate, I am grateful to have a chance to share "Peach Flower Landscape" with new audiences. It is a work based on an ancient vision of harmony from my cultural heritage. I hope this work can help people discover the vitality in the motion and vibrancy of nature, the thirst for freedom within our soul and a glimpse of the life force that connects all of us.



Nai-Ni Chen.

Carolyn Dorfman

Artistic Director, Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company

As a modern choreographer/dancer, I am interested in creating dances that celebrate the full range of human emotion and experience and speak to audiences, through structural and movement metaphor, about the human condition.

Dance has the extraordinary power to speak. As we look and listen, we discover the commonalities of the human experience and our relationship to one another. From the shared space, time and dynamics of the dancers on the stage, we understand that we, too, always exist in relationship to others.

If art reflects life, as I believe it does, then a visceral and personal connection to what we see on the stage affirms the experiences of our individual and collective journeys. Dance and the ensemble become a powerful and visual metaphor for life and community. The trust, commitment and connectedness of the ensemble teach us about our potential not merely to coexist but to support and thrive with those around us. The onstage balance of the individual and the ensemble, the individual movement or moment to the whole, tells us of the delicate balance that we must strike in our own lives. When we achieve this, the results are astoundingly beautiful.



Carolyn Dorfman.

For me, the creative process is a dialogue, a conversation between choreographer and dancer. I am interested in a collaborative process with my dancers, and I create for, on and with them. Who they are and how they think and move are critical to the development of each dance. Their virtuosity, technically and dramatically, inspire me.

As a Principal Affiliate, my goal is to involve NJPAC audience members, both literally and figuratively, in my work and in the creative process. Through performances, residencies, master classes, open rehearsals, lecture-demonstrations, teacher training and more, I want audience members to celebrate dance and, through it, the fullness of life.

George Street Playhouse

Wendy Liscow, Artistic Director

Susan Kerner, Touring Theatre Artistic Director

Young people need the skills that will enable them to question what they see and hear and the confidence to draw their own conclusions. Out of this belief has grown a commitment at George Street Playhouse to use its theater productions as a means of providing young audiences with these tools. Our commitment to this principle governs our mainstage productions, which include such classics as "The Diary of Anne Frank" and "To Kill a Mockingbird," and our educational outreach program, the George Street Playhouse Touring Theatre.



"And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank,"

The plays selected for the Touring Theatre repertory address personal and social issues that young people face every day. To accomplish our mission, we present programs that entertain as well as educate, communicating important messages with humor and compassion. Since its inception in 1988, the Touring Theatre has nearly doubled its audience; in the 1996-97 season, the program traveled to more than 300 schools and reached 80,000 students.

As a Principal Affiliate of NJPAC, George Street Playhouse has found another partner and venue

for offering new audiences a rich theater experience. Our presentation for NJPAC's inaugural season is "And Then They Came for Me: Remembering the World of Anne Frank" by James Still. Commissioned by George Street Playhouse and Young Audiences of New Jersey, "And Then They Came for Me" tells the poignant story of the hidden children of the Holocaust.

Whenever possible, the cast will lead a workshop following the performance, inviting students to discuss the play and their reactions to it. In addition, all teachers whose classes attend "And Then They Came for Me" will receive an extensive resource packet with background information, as well as suggested pre- and post performance activities.

These workshops and the accompanying resource materials provide young audience members and their teachers with the opportunity to explore the legacy of the Holocaust. By engaging in this process, they begin to look at their own lives more closely and examine the choices they make. And we fulfill our mission.

Deborah Mitchell

Director, The New Jersey Tap Ensemble

The art form of tap dancing is deeply rooted in American tradition, with a rich history that embraces and weaves together our diverse cultures. Over the past few decades, however, tap dancing and particularly rhythm tap dancing, which requires skill on the part of the dancer to use the body and feet as musical instruments to produce intricate, sophisticated, rhythmic patterns, phrases and sounds, have long been absent from the dance world, the stage and public view.

Through its Principal Affiliate Program, NJPAC will provide a vehicle for new generations of dance audiences and dancers to connect once again with this art form and its history and traditions. A nurturing and productive environment, as well as exposure to tap professionals, will give the next generation of tap artists an opportunity to develop new works, participate in collaborative efforts with other dance artists, explore new techniques and venture into new directions to ensure a place for tap dancing in the future of dance.



Deborah Mitchell.

Nicholas Rodriguez

Artistic Director, DanceCompass

As a teenager growing up in Paterson, New Jersey, I had few options for artistic outlets. The only arts activity I experienced came in the form of an occasional art or music class in school. Dance did not exist in my cultural, school or home life. At the age of twelve, I was fortunate to find an after-school program that introduced me to theater and dance. I then tapped into undiscovered talents and began an amazing period of creative exploration through the arts. This training process enriched my educational and personal development as well.



Nicholas Rodriguez in flight.

What a wonderful opportunity, as a NJPAC Principal Affiliate, to be able to share my skills and experiences with young artists and community members, and to contribute to *their* growth in the arts. I hope to instill in a new generation of young artists an appreciation for the creative process and a respect for dance as an art form, it is my belief that this exposure to the arts can enrich the human spirit and positively change people's lives. Most important, I hope my own personal and artistic history will serve as an example of hard work and perseverance. I am thrilled that my work as an artist will continue to evolve and expand at NJPAC, and I look forward to introducing my choreography and my dance company to new audiences.

WBGO-JAZZ 88

Cephas Bowles, WBGO-FM General Manager

Jazz was created by African Americans at the turn of the twentieth century in New Orleans and is regarded as America's greatest gift to world culture. Because of cutbacks in music education and the abandonment of jazz programming by commercial broadcasters, fewer and fewer Americans are exposed to this art form. Without showcases for jazz artists and music, jazz could become a relic of the past and, ultimately, disappear from the American musical landscape.

To avert this dismal fate, Newark-based WBGO-FM, an affiliate of National Public Radio, devotes all of its resources to jazz-formatted programming. As the metropolitan area's only twenty-four-hour traditional jazz radio station, WBGO FM presents and showcases jazz to reach current audiences and to nurture jazz audiences of the future. Listeners can turn their dial to 88.3 FM any time of the day and know they will hear the sounds of Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Wynton Marsalis and other jazz greats.

NJPAC also understands the importance of preserving this uniquely American art form and has joined forces with WBGO FM to provide a venue for its study and performance. As a NJPAC Principal Affiliate, WBGO will present live jazz concerts for young audiences as part of the NJPAC/WBGO Jazz for Teens Program, where young people will study jazz performance, learn about this art form and meet the musicians who play it. The radio station also will work with NJPAC and several other organizations to present musical events for adults as well. Music lovers will hear the voices of today's creative masters – the jazz musicians – in their interpretations of jazz classic and original compositions.



Rufus Reid, education coordinator, NJPAC/WBGO Jazz for Teens.

Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts

Miriam Flaherty, Director, Education

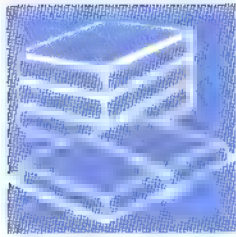
The power of the arts to educate and transform is perhaps never more evident or powerful as when very young children take part in quality arts experiences that move beyond entertainment and exposure to education. Older children and adults often can speak to that one experience when a performance or an artist brought them to a new understanding of themselves and their world.



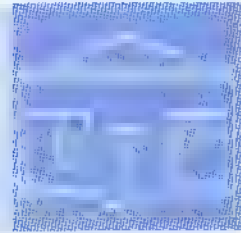
Wolf Trap Institute artist Slim Harrison and fellow musicians.

For young children, the arts are naturally integrated into the way they learn new skills, acquire information and interact with adults and peers. As they engage in the creative process, children participate in the learning process: they explore solutions; reflect and revise, and draw upon the input from others in shaping ideas. Perhaps most important, they experience the joy of learning. Children quickly come to understand that the arts celebrate possibilities – what educators call divergent thinking and creative problem solving.

For over fifteen years, the Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts has worked in classrooms across the country with professional performing artists trained in early childhood practices. Beginning in 1997, we join with NJPAC in bringing one of the state's greatest resources – its resident artists to benefit our investment in the future: our children. As a NJPAC Principal Affiliate, we will work together as a community, in cooperation with professional artists, Head Start programs and public and private preschool programs, and with financial support from the Prudential Foundation, to strengthen the learning process for young children through early participation in the arts.



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